

ΤΑ ΤΟΥ ΔΡΑΜΑΤΟΣ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΑ

ΠΡΑΞΑΓΟΡΑ, γυνή Ἀττική.

ΧΟΡΟΣ, γυναικῶν Ἀττικῶν.

ΓΥΝΗ Α, γείτων Πραξαγόρας.

ΓΥΝΗ Β.

ΒΛΕΠΥΡΟΣ, γέρον, ἀνὴρ Πραξαγόρας.

ΓΕΙΤΩΝ Βλεπύρου.

ΧΡΕΜΗΣ, γέρον.

ΑΝΗΡ οὐ βουλόμενος τὰ ἑαυτοῦ καταθεῖναι.

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ΕΠΙΓΕΝΗΣ, μεираκιον, ἐρῶν τῆς κόρης.

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Κωφὰ πρόσωπα

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Characters Of The Play

PRAXAGORA, *an Athenian wife.*

CHORUS *of Athenian wives.*

FIRST WOMAN, *one of Praxagora's neighbours.*

SECOND WOMAN.

BLEPYRUS, *an old man, Praxagora's husband.*

NEIGHBOUR *to Blepyrus.*

CHREMES, *an old man.*

DISSIDENT, *a man who is unwilling to surrender his property.*

HERALDESS.

FIRST OLD WOMAN.

GIRL.

EPIGENES, *a youth, in love with the Girl.*

SECOND OLD WOMAN.

THIRD OLD WOMAN.

MAID *to Praxagora.*

Silent Characters

SICON *and* PARMENON, *slaves to the Neighbour.*

TWO YOUNG WOMEN *accompanying Blepyrus.*

ΠΡΑΞΑΓΟΡΑ

ὦ λαμπρὸν ὄμμα τοῦ τροχλάτου λύχνου,
 κάλλιστ' ἐν εὐστόχοισιν ἐξηυρημένον
 (γουνὰς τε γὰρ σὰς καὶ τύχας δηλώσομεν·
 τροχῷ γὰρ ἐλαθεὶς κεραμικῆς ῥύμης ὑπο
 μυκτῆρσι λαμπρὰς ἡλίου τιμὰς ἔχεις), 5
 ὄρμα φλογὸς σημεῖα τὰ ξυγκείμενα.
 σοὶ γὰρ μόνῳ δηλοῦμεν - εἰκότως, ἐπεὶ
 κὰν τοῖσι δωματίοισιν Ἀφροδίτης τρόπων
 πειρωμέναιοι πλησίος παραστατεῖς,
 λорδουμένων τε σωμάτων ἐπιστάτην 10
 ὀφθαλμὸν οὐδεὶς τὸν σὸν ἐξείργει δόμων·
 μόνος δὲ μηρῶν εἰς ἀπορρήτους μυχοὺς
 λάμπεις, αφεύων τὴν ἐπανθοῦσαν τρίχα·
 στοὰς δὲ καρποῦ Βακχίου τε νάματος
 πλήρεις ὑποὶ γνύσαισι συμπαραστατεῖς· 15
 καὶ ταῦτα συνδρῶν οὐ λαλεῖς τοῖς πλησίον.
 ἀνθ' ὧν συνέσει καὶ τὰ νῦν βουλευμάτα,
 ὅσα Σκίροις ἔδοξε ταῖς ἐμαῖς φίλαις.
 ἀλλ' οὐδεμία πάρεστιν ἃς ἦκειν ἐχρῆν.
 καίτοι πρὸς ὄρθρον γ' ἐστίν, ἢ δ' ἐκκλησία 20
 αὐτίκα μάλ' ἔσται· καταλαβεῖν δ' ἡμᾶς ἔδρας 21
 δεῖ τὰς ἐταῖρας κάγκαθιζομένας λαθεῖν, 23
 ἃς Φυρόμαχος ποτ' εἶπεν, εἰ μέμνησθ' ἔτι. 22
 τί δῆτ' ἂν εἴη; πότερον οὐκ ἐρραμμένους 24
 ἔχουσι τοὺς πώγωνας, οὓς εἴρητ' ἔχειν; 25
 ἢ θαίματ' ἀνδρεῖα κλεψάσαις λαθεῖν
 ἦν χαλεπὸν αὐταῖς; ἀλλ' ὁρῶ τονδὶ λύχνον

- 2 εὐστόχοισιν R: εὐσκόποισιν ΑΓΛ ἰΣ^{RG}.
 2 ἐξηυρημένον (εὐρ) Gray, cf. Σ^{RG} εὐρημένον: ἐξητημένον RAΓΛ: ἐξηρητημένον
 Vb1²: ἐξητημένον Bergler.
 4 ὑπο Küster: ἀπο codd. Suda.
 9 πλησίος ΓΛ: πλησίως R: πλησίον A.
 14 δὲ Blaydes: τε codd. Suda.
 17 συνέσει Biset: συνοίσει codd.
 23 transposed by Dover to precede 22.
 23 κάγκαθιζομένας Σ^A (on 1): πῶς κάγκαθιζομένας Λ: καθαγιαζομένας πως ΑΓ: πῶς
 κωλαθιζομένας R: κῶλά θ' ἰζομένας Palmer.
 22 Φυρόμαχος R: Σφυρόμαχος ΑΓΛ Suda Σ(i)^R Σ^{ΓA}: Κλεόμαχος Λ^s Σ(ii)^R+λ γ^oΣ^{ΓA}.
 25 τοὺς Λ: τὰς R (ΑΓ omit 24-26).
 26 ἢ θαίματ' Ald.: ἦσθ' αἰμάτια Λ: εἴθ' αἰμάτια R.

[The stage-house represents three town houses. Praxagora comes out of the middle one. She is wearing man's clothes, but her pale, smooth face proclaims her a woman. In her right hand she carries a lamp, in her left hand she is clutching a walking-stick and various other objects. She holds out the lamp at arm's length and apostrophizes it, declaiming in tragic style.]

PRAXAGORA:

O eye most radiant of the wheel-borne lamp,
 Superb invention of sagacious men --
 For I thy birth and fortunes shall declare:
 Born on a wheel, by power of potter's arm,
 Thou hast the sun's bright glories in thy nozzles --
 Send forth the flaming signal as agreed!

[She waves the lamp around, repeating the same pattern of movements several times.]

To thee alone our secret we'll reveal;
 And rightly, for within our bedrooms too,
 When we try out new sexual variations,
 Close by thou standest, and thine eye o'ersees
 Our arching bodies, yet none ever shuts it
 Out of the chamber; thou alone dost shine
 Into the secret corners of our thighs
 When singeing off the hairs that sprout from them;
 By us thou standest when illicitly
 We open up the brimming granaries
 And stores of Bacchic juice -- yet, true accomplice,
 You never blab a word to other folk!
 And therefore shalt thou know our present scheme,
 All that my friends resolved on at the Scira. --

[Looking off, left and right] But none of those who were supposed to come is here, although it's beginning to get light; the Assembly will be starting very soon, and we've got to bag places and get seated there without being noticed, acting in the most intimate cooperation as Phyromachus once put it, if you remember that now. *[Looking off again]* What *can* it be? Is it that they haven't got the beards sewn together, which they were told to have? Or have they found it hard to nick those men's cloaks unobserved? Ah, but here I see a lamp coming

προσιόντα. φέρε νυν ἐπαναχωρήσω πάλιν,
μὴ καὶ τις ὦν ἀνὴρ ὁ προσιῶν τυγχάνει.

ΧΟΡΟΣ

ώρα βαδίζειν, ὥς ὁ κήρυξ ἀρτίως
ἡμῶν προσιουσῶν δευτέραν κεκόκκυκεν. 30

Πρ. ἐγὼ δέ γ' ὑμᾶς προσδοκῶς ἐγρηγόρη
τὴν νύκτα πᾶσαν. ἀλλὰ φέρε τὴν γείτονα
τὴνδ' ἐκκαλέσωμαι θρυγανῶσα τὴν θύραν·
δεῖ γὰρ τὸν ἀνδρ' αὐτῆς λαθεῖν.

ΓΥΝΗ Α ἤκουσά τοι 35

ὑποδουμένη τὸ κυνὴμά σου τῶν δακτύλων,
ἅτ' οὐ καταδαρθοῦς'. ὁ γὰρ ἀνὴρ, ὦ φιλτάτη—
Σαλαμίνιος γὰρ ἐστὶν ὧ ξύνειμ' ἐγώ—
τὴν νύχθ' ὅλην ἤλαυνέ μ' ἐν τοῖς στρώμασιν,
ὥστ' ἄρτι τουτὶ θοῖμάτιον αὐτοῦ ἴλαβον. 40

Πρ. καὶ μὴν ὁρῶ καὶ Κλειναρέτην καὶ Σωστράτην
προσιοῦσαν ἤδη τήνδε καὶ Φιλαινέτην.

Χο. οὐκ οὐκ ἐπέιξεσθ'; ὥς Γλύκη κατώμοσεν
τὴν ὑστάτην ἤκουσαν ἡμῶν τρεῖς χοᾶς
οἴνου ὑποτίσειν κάρεβίνθων χοῖνικα. 45

Πρ. τὴν Σμικυθίωνος δ' οὐχ ὁρᾷς Μελιστίχην
σπεύδουσιν ἐν ταῖς ἐμβάσιν; καὶ μοι δοκεῖ
κατὰ σχολὴν παρὰ τάνδρὸς ἐξελθεῖν μόνη.

Γυ.^α τὴν τοῦ καπήλου δ' οὐχ ὁρᾷς Γευσιστράτην
ἔχουσιν ἐν τῇ δεξιᾷ τὴν λαμπάδα; 50

Πρ. καὶ τὴν Φιλοδωρήτου γε καὶ Χαιρητάδου
ὁρῶ προσιούσας χάτέρας πολλὰς πάνυ
γυναικας, ὅ τι πέρ ἐστ' ὄφελος ἐν τῇ πόλει.

ΓΥΝΗ Β

καὶ πάνυ τάλαιπῶρως ἔγωγ', ὦ φιλτάτη,
ἐκδράσα παρέδυν. ὁ γὰρ ἀνὴρ τὴν νύχθ' ὅλην 55

29 τύγχάνει Naber: τυγχάνεις RAΓΛ: τυγχάνη B.

31 προσιουσῶν Le Febvre: προσιόντων codd.

32 ἐγρηγόρη Porson: ἐγρηγορεῖν codd.

34 θρυγαν- Biset, cf. Hesychius 9787: τρυγαν- A: θρυγον- RΛ: τρυγον- Γ Suda.

40 αὐτοῦ ἴλαβον (αὐτ' οὐλαβον) R²: αὐτοῦ λαβῶν vel sim. R¹ AΓΛ

42 προσιοῦσαν Ald.: παροῦσαν codd.

44-45 ἡμῶν ... οἴνου Richards: οἴνου ... ἡμῶν (ἀπο-) codd. Suda.

51 Φιλοδωρήτου A: Φιλοδωρίτου RΓΛ.

51 γε Meineke: τε codd.

this way. Here now, let me step back again, in case by any chance the person coming is actually a man. [*She withdraws under an open wing of the stage-house, left, as several women enter from the other side – the first of the groups which will form the chorus. They are wearing women's inner (but not outer) garments, and carrying men's cloaks, shoes, walking-sticks and false beards.*]

30 * CHORUS-LEADER [*calling back to her companions as she approaches*]: Time to be moving now, because the morning herald has just crowed for the second time as we were coming along!

PRAXAGORA [*emerging to meet the new arrivals*]: And I've been awake all night waiting for you lot. But look, let me call out my
35 neighbour here, just *scratching* at her door, because her husband mustn't hear anything.

[*She taps very gently on the door to the left of her own. After a short delay a woman (First Woman) comes out; she is already wearing man's shoes.*]

FIRST WOMAN: I was putting these shoes on, you know, and I did hear the scrape of your fingers. Because I never got to sleep. My husband, my darling – because my other half comes from Salamis, you
40 see, and all night long he was *rowing* me under the covers. So it was only just now that I was able to take this cloak of his.

PRAXAGORA [*looking off, right*]: Now I can also see Cleinarete coming – and here's Sostrate – and Philaenete.

CHORUS-LEADER [*calling out to those approaching*]: Well,
44–5 hurry up, won't you? Because Glyce took an oath that the last of us to arrive would have to pay a fine of two gallons of wine and a quart of chickpeas.

PRAXAGORA [*to First Woman*]: And don't you see Smicythion's wife, Melistiche, hurrying along in his shoes? And I think she was the only one that was able to get away from her husband in her own time.

FIRST WOMAN: And don't you see the tavern-keeper's wife,
50 Geusistrate, with the torch in her right hand?

PRAXAGORA: Yes, and I can see Philodoretus' and Chaeretades' wives coming, and a great many other women, all that's worth anything in the City. [*By now a full chorus of twenty-four has assembled.*]

SECOND WOMAN [*arriving last, breathlessly apologetic*]: Oh,
55 darling, I really had the greatest trouble escaping and slipping along here!

ἔβηττε, τριχίδων ἑσπέρας ἐμπλήμενος.

Πρ. κάθησθε τοῖνυν, ὥς ἂν ἀνέρωμαι τάδε
ὑμᾶς, ἐπειδὴ συλλελεγμένας ὁρῶ,
ὅσα Σκίροις ἔδοξεν εἰ δεδράκατε.

Γυ.^α ἔγωγε. πρῶτον μὲν γ' ἔχω τὰς μασχάλας 60
λόχμης δασυτέρας, καθάπερ ἦν ξυγκείμενον·
ἔπειθ', ὁπόθ' ἀνὴρ εἰς ἀγορὰν οἴχοιτό μου,
ἀλειψαμένη τὸ σῶμ' ὅλον δι' ἡμέρας
ἐχραινόμην ἐστῶσα πρὸς τὸν ἥλιον.

Γυ.^β κᾶγωγε· τὸ ξυρὸν δέ γ' ἐκ τῆς οἰκίας 65
ἔρριψα πρῶτον, ἵνα δασυνθῇν ὅλη
καὶ μηδὲν εἶην ἔτι γυναικὶ προσφέρῃς.

Πρ. ἔχετε δὲ τοὺς πώγωνας, οὓς εἶρητ' ἔχειν
πάσαισιν ὑμῖν, ὁπότε συλλεγοίμεθα;

Γυ.^α νῆ τὴν Ἑκάτην, καλὸν γ' ἔγωγε τουτουί. 70

Γυ.^β κᾶγωγ' Ἐπικράτους οὐκ ὀλίγῳ καλλίονα.

Πρ. ὑμεῖς δὲ τί φατε;

Γυ.^α φασί· κατανεύουσι γοῦν.

Πρ. καὶ μὴν τά γ' ἄλλ' ὑμῖν ὁρῶ πεπραγμένα· 75
Λακωνικὰς γὰρ ἔχετε καὶ βακτηρίας
καὶ θαίματ' αὐτῶν, καθάπερ εἵπομεν.

Γυ.^α ἔγωγέ τοι τὸ σκύταλον ἐξηνεγκάμην
τὸ τοῦ Λαμίου τουτὶ καθεύδοντος λάθρα.

Γυ.^β τοῦτ' ἔστ' ἐκεῖνο τῶν σκυτάλων ὧν πέρδεται†.

Πρ. νῆ τὸν Δία τὸν σωτῆρ', ἐπιτήδειός γ' ἂν ἦν 80
τὴν τοῦ Πανόπτου διφθέραν ἐνημμένους
εἵπερ τις ἄλλος βουκολεῖν τὸν δῆμιον.
ἄλλ' ἄγεθ', ὅπως καὶ τάπ'ι τούτοις δράσομεν,
ἕως ἔτ' ἐστὶν ἄστρα κατὰ τὸν οὐρανόν·

57 ἂν ἀνέρωμαι Dawes: ἀνείρωμαι RL: ἂν εἴρωμαι AG.

64 ἐχραινόμην Boissonade: ἐχλαινόμην codd. Suda.

69 ὑμῖν RL: ἡμῖν AG.

72 κατανεύουσι AL: κατανεῦσι R: κατανεῦσαι Γ.

72 γοῦν vel sim. RL: γάρ AG.

78 ἐκεῖνο (ἐκείνων Suda) τῶν σκυτάλων ὧν πέρδεται† codd. Suda: ἐκεῖνο τὸ σκύταλον ᾧ π. Bothe: ἐκείνων ὧν <περιφέρων> π. Coulon: perh. e.g. ἐκεῖνο <δηθ', ὅ> πέρδεται <φέρων>.

81 τὸν δῆμιον AGΛ: τὸν δημήμιον R: τὸν δῆμιον Σ^R: τ δημί Σ^R: τὸ δῆμιον Bothe.

82 ἄλλ' ἄγεθ' Dindorf: γεθ' (preceded by a space) R: λέγεθ' AGΛ.

The whole night long my husband was coughing, because last evening he'd stuffed himself with anchovies.

PRAXAGORA [*to all the women*]: Well, sit down, then [*they do so*], so that now I see you're all assembled, I can ask you this: have you done all the things that we resolved on at the Scira?

60 FIRST WOMAN: I have. To begin with, I've got armpits that are bushier than a shrubbery, just as we agreed. Then, whenever my husband went off to the Agora, I oiled myself all over and stood in the sun all day to get a tan.

65 SECOND WOMAN: Me too; but the *first* thing I did was throw my razor out of the house, so that I would get hairy all over and not look like a woman at all any more.

PRAXAGORA: And have you got the beards, which you were all told to have with you when we met?

70 FIRST WOMAN [*displaying the false beard she has brought*]: Yes, by Hecate, I've got a lovely one here.

SECOND WOMAN [*ditto*]: And I've got one that beats Epicrates by a street!

PRAXAGORA [*to the others*]: And you, what's your answer?

FIRST WOMAN [*surveying the group*]: It's yes; at least they're nodding.

75 PRAXAGORA: And the other things I can see you've done; you've got Laconian shoes, and walking-sticks, and men's cloaks, just as we said.

FIRST WOMAN [*displaying a walking-stick with a knobbed head*]: I have, anyway; I brought out this cudgel of Lamius' on the sly when he was asleep.

SECOND WOMAN: So *that's* the one he goes around with, farting!

79-80 PRAXAGORA: By Zeus the Saviour, if he put on the leather coat of the All-seeing One, he, if any man, would be the proper person to be one-to-one with ... the public executioner! But come now, let's make sure we get on with our job, while there are still stars in the sky. The

- ἡκκλησία δ', εἰς ἣν παρεσκευάσμεθα
 ἡμεῖς βαδίζειν, ἐξ ἧς γενήσεται. 85
- Γυ.^α νῆ τὸν Δι', ὥστε δεῖ γε καταλαβεῖν ἔδρας
 ὑπὸ τῷ λίθῳ τῶν πρυτάνεων καταντικρύν.
- Γυ.^β ταυτί γέ τοι, νῆ τὸν Δί', ἐφερόμην, ἵνα
 πληρουμένης ξαίνοιμι τῆς ἐκκλησίας.
- Πρ. πληρουμένης, τάλαινα;
- Γυ.^β νῆ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν 90
 ἔγωγε. τί γὰρ ἂν χεῖρον ἀκροώμην ἅμα
 ξαίνουσα; γυμνά δ' ἐστί μου τὰ παιδιά.
- Πρ. ἰδοὺ γέ σε ξαίνουσαν, ἣν τοῦ σώματος
 οὐδὲν παραφῆναι τοῖς καθημένοις ἔδει.
 οὐκοῦν καλὰ γ' ἂν πάθοιμεν, εἰ πλήρης τύχοι 95
 ὁ δῆμος ὧν κᾶπειθ' ὑπερβαίνουσά τις
 ἀναβαλλομένη δείξειε τὸν Φορμίσιον.
 ἦν δ' ἐγκαθιζώμεσθα πρότεραι, λήσομεν
 ξυστειλάμεναι θαίματ'· τὸν πώγωνά τε
 ὅταν καθῶμεν ὃν περιδησόμεσθ' ἐκεῖ, 100
 τίς οὐκ ἂν ἡμᾶς ἄνδρας ἡγήσασθ' ὀρών;
 Ἄγύρριος γοῦν τὸν Προνόμου πώγων' ἔχων
 λέληθε. καίτοι πρότερον ἦν οὗτος γυνή·
 νυνὶ δ' - ὀρᾷς; - πράττει τὰ μέγιστ' ἐν τῇ πόλει.
 τούτου γέ τοι, νῆ τὴν ἐπιούσαν ἡμέραν, 105
 τόλμημα τολμῶμεν τοσοῦτον οὐνεκα,
 ἦν πῶς παραλαβεῖν τῆς πόλεως τὰ πράγματα
 δυνώμεθ', ὥστ' ἀγαθόν τι πράξαι τὴν πόλιν.
 νῦν μὲν γὰρ οὔτε θέομεν οὔτ' ἐλαύνομεν.
- Γυ.^α καὶ πῶς γυναικῶν θηλύφρων ξυνουσία 110
 δημηγορήσει;
- Πρ. πολὺ μὲν οὖν ἄριστά που.
 λέγουσι γὰρ καὶ τῶν νεανίσκων ὅσοι
 πλεῖστα σποδοῦνται, δεινοτάτους εἶναι λέγειν·
 ἡμῖν δ' ὑπάρχει τοῦτο κατὰ τύχην τινά.
- Γυ.^α οὐκ οἶδα· δεινὸν δ' ἐστὶν ἢ μὴ ἴμπειρία. 115
- Πρ. οὐκ οὖν ἐπίτηδες ξυνελέγημεν ἐνθάδε,
 ὅπως προμελετήσαιμεν ἀκεῖ δεῖ λέγειν;

86 γε Meineke: σε codd.

91 ἅμα Dobree: ἀρα codd.

117 προμελετήσαιμεν Kidd: προμελετήσωμεν codd.

85 Assembly meeting, which we've made preparations to go to, is due to begin at sunrise.

FIRST WOMAN: Yes, it is, so we really must occupy some seats, at the foot of the Rock, directly facing the Prytaneis.

SECOND WOMAN [*displaying a woman's work-basket, which she has brought along in addition to her masculine paraphernalia*]: Actually that's why I brought along this stuff, so I could do some carding while the Assembly was filling up.

90 PRAXAGORA [*furious*]: *Filling up*, you idiot?

SECOND WOMAN: Yes, indeed, by Artemis. I won't be any less well able to hear the speeches, will I, if I'm carding as well? And my children have nothing to wear!

PRAXAGORA: Listen to you – carding! When you ought not to be showing any part of your body to the men sitting there! Why, it would be a fine thing for us, if the Assembly was already full, and then one of us was climbing over them, lifted up her clothes and revealed her real Phorm...isius! But if we get ourselves seated *first*, nobody will see
99-100 who we are if we draw the cloaks tight around us; and when we sport the long beards that we're going to have tied on there, who that sees us won't think we're men? After all, Agyrrhius has nicked Pronomus' beard without anyone noticing, and that although *he* used to be a woman; and
105 now, do you see, he's *screwing up* the City with the best of them! This, I tell you, this, by the holy light of this dawning day [*she stretches out her arms towards the eastern horizon*], is the reason why we are venturing this great venture, to see if we can succeed in taking over the running of the City so that we can do it some good. Because as things are now, we're dead in the water.

110 FIRST WOMAN: But how will a "feminine-minded company of women" be able to make public speeches?

PRAXAGORA: Why, very well indeed, I fancy! They say, don't they, that the young men who get shagged the most turn out to be the smartest speakers? Well, by a stroke of luck, we all have that advantage!

115 FIRST WOMAN: I don't know about that, but inexperience is a daunting thing.

PRAXAGORA: Well, wasn't that exactly why we gathered here, in

- οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις τὸ γένειον ἂν περιδουμένη
 ἄλλαι θ' ὅσαι λαλεῖν μεμελετήκασί που.
 Γυ.^β τίς δ', ὦ μέλ', ἡμῶν οὐ λαλεῖν ἐπίσταται; 120
 Πρ. ἴθι δὴ σύ, περιδοῦ, καὶ ταχέως ἀνὴρ γενοῦ·
 ἐγὼ δὲ θεῖσα τοὺς στεφάνους περιδήσομαι
 καυτὴ μεθ' ὑμῶν, ἣν τί μοι δόξη λέγειν.
 Γυ.^β δεῦρ', ὦ γλυκυτάτη Πραξαγόρα· σκέψαι, τάλαν,
 ὥς καὶ καταγέλαστον τὸ πρᾶγμα φαίνεται. 125
 Πρ. πῶς καταγέλαστον;
 Γυ.^β ὥσπερ εἴ τις σηπίαις
 πώγωνα περιδήσειεν ἐσταθευμέναις.
 Πρ. ὁ περιστῆταρχος, περιφέρειν χρή τὴν γαλῆν.
 πάριτ' εἰς τὸ πρόσθεν. Ἀρίφραδες, παῦσαι λαλῶν·
 κάθιζε παριῶν. τίς ἀγορεύειν βούλεται; 130
 Γυ.^β ἐγώ.
 Πρ. περίθου δὴ τὸν στέφανον τυχαγάθῃ.
 Γυ.^β ἰδοῦ.
 Πρ. λέγοις ἂν.
 Γυ.^β εἴτα πρὶν πιεῖν λέγω;
 Πρ. ἰδοὺν πιεῖν.
 Γυ.^β τί γάρ, ὦ μέλ', ἐστεφανωσάμην;
 Πρ. ἄπιθ' ἐκποδῶν. τοιαῦτ' ἂν ἡμᾶς ἡργάσω
 κάκεϊ.
 Γυ.^β τί δ'; οὐ πίνουσι κἄν τῆκκλησίᾳ; 135
 Πρ. ἰδοῦ γέ σοι πίνουσι.

order to rehearse what we're to say when we go there? You can't tie on your beard too soon, and likewise all the others who, I take it, have practised their talks.

120 SECOND WOMAN: Well, dear girl, every one of us knows how to talk!

PRAXAGORA: You come on, now, tie it on, and quickly turn into a man; and I'll lay down the garlands and tie one on myself together with you, in case I decide to make a speech.

[Praxagora lays two garlands on the stage-altar. She then puts on her false beard, as do First Woman and Second Woman.]

125 SECOND WOMAN *[who has been examining her new face in her mirror]*: Come here, Praxagora, my sweet! *[Praxagora goes over to her.]* Look, my dear *[offering her the mirror]*, and see how really ludicrous the thing looks.

PRAXAGORA: In what way ludicrous?

SECOND WOMAN: It's as if someone tied beards on to lightly browned cuttlefish!

130 PRAXAGORA *[returning to the platform, and taking the role of herald]*: Purifier, please carry the ferret round the bounds. *[Loudly]* Move forward! *[Pointing to an imaginary person at the back of the meeting]* Stop talking, Ariphrades; move forward and sit down. *[After a pause]* Who wishes to speak?

SECOND WOMAN *[coming forward]*: I do.

PRAXAGORA: Then put on the garland, and may it bring you good fortune.

SECOND WOMAN *[taking a garland and putting it on her head]*: There you are. *[She takes her stand on the platform and looks inquisitively about her.]*

PRAXAGORA: Go on, speak.

SECOND WOMAN: You mean I'm to make a speech before having a drink?

PRAXAGORA: Drink indeed!

SECOND WOMAN: My good woman, what else did I put on a garland for?

134-5 PRAXAGORA: Off you go, out of the way. You'd have gone there and done the same sort of thing to us.

SECOND WOMAN *[standing her ground]*: What, don't they drink in the Assembly too?

PRAXAGORA: Listen to you – "don't they drink"!

- Γυ.^β νῆ τὴν Ἄρτεμιν,
 καὶ ταῦτά γ' εὕζωρον. τὰ γοῦν βουλευήματα
 αὐτῶν, ὅσ' ἂν πράξωσιν ἐνθυμουμένοις,
 ὥσπερ μεθύνωντων ἐστὶ παραπεπληγμένα.
 καὶ νῆ Δία σπένδουσί γ'· ἢ τίνος χάριν 140
 τοσαῦτ' ἂν ἠὔχοντ', εἴπερ οἶνος μὴ παρῇ;
 καὶ λοιδοροῦνται γ' ὥσπερ ἐμπεπωκότες,
 καὶ τὸν παροινούντ' ἐκφέρουσ' οἱ τοξόται.
 Πρ. σὺ μὲν βάδιζε καὶ κάθησ'· οὐδὲν γὰρ εἶ.
 Γυ.^β νῆ τὸν Δί', ἧ μοι μὴ γενειᾶν κρεῖττον ἦν· 145
 δίψῃ γάρ, ὥς ἔοικ', ἀφανανθήσομαι.
 Πρ. ἔσθ' ἥτις ἑτέρα βούλεται λέγειν;
 Γυ.^α ἐγώ.
 Πρ. ἴθι δὴ στεφανοῦ· καὶ γὰρ τὸ χρῆμ' ἐργάζεται.
 ἄγε νυν, ὅπως ἀνδριστὶ καὶ καλῶς ἐρεῖς,
 διερεισαμένη τὸ σχῆμα τῇ βακτηρίᾳ. 150
 Γυ.^α ἐβουλόμην μὲν ἕτερον ἂν τῶν ἡθάδων
 λέγειν τὰ βέλτισθ', ἵν' ἐκαθήμην ἥσυχος·
 νῦν δ' οὐκ ἐάσω, κατὰ γε τὴν ἐμὴν μίαν,
 ἐν τοῖς καπηλείοισι λάκκους ἐμποιεῖν
 ὕδατος. ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ δοκεῖ, μὰ τῷ θεῷ. 155
 Πρ. μὰ τῷ θεῷ, τάλαινα; ποῦ τὸν νοῦν ἔχεις;
 Γυ.^α τί δ' ἐστίν; οὐ γὰρ δὴ πιεῖν γ' ἤτησά σε.
 Πρ. μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἀνὴρ ὢν τῷ θεῷ κατώμοσας,
 καίτοι τά γ' ἄλλ' εἰποῦσα δεξιώτατα.
 Γυ.^α ὦ νῆ τὸν Ἀπόλλω—
 Πρ. παῦε τοίνυν· ὥς ἐγώ 160
 ἐκκλησιάσους· οὐκ ἂν προβαίην τὸν πόδα
 τὸν ἕτερον, εἰ μὴ ταῦτ' ἀκριβωθήσεται.
 Γυ.^β φέρε τὸν στέφανον· ἐγὼ γὰρ αὖ λέξω πάλιν.
 οἶμαι γὰρ ἤδη μεμελετηκέναι καλῶς.
 ἐμοὶ γάρ, ὦ γυναῖκες αἱ καθήμεναι,— 165
 Πρ. γυναῖκας αὖ, δύστηνε, τοὺς ἀνδρας λέγεις;
- 141 τοσαῦτ' ἂν Hermann: τοσαῦτά γ' RA: τοσαῦτ' ΓΛ.
 142 ἐμπ- AL: ἐκπ- RF.
 146 δίψῃ B: δίψει RAΓΛ.
 150 διερεισαμένη Schaefer, cf. Σ^{RF}A: διερεισμένη vel sim. codd.
 161 ἐκκλησιασους Bentley: ἐκκλησιάζουσ' R^{pe}ΓA: ἐκκληζιάζουσ' A: ἐκκλησιάζουμιτρο
 R^{ac}.

140 SECOND WOMAN: They *do*, by Artemis, and pretty strong stuff too! At any rate their policies, if you consider all the things they do, are crazy enough to be the work of drunkards. And what's more, they pour libations, they do; or else why would they make all those prayers, if there wasn't any wine there? *And* they rail at each other like men who've had a few, and then someone turns violent and is carried out by the archers.

PRAXAGORA: You go and sit down. You're useless.

145 SECOND WOMAN [*reluctantly relinquishing her garland and returning to her place*]: By Zeus, I'd have been better off staying beardless. I'm so thirsty, I think I'm going to die of dehydration.

PRAXAGORA: Is there anyone else who wants to speak?

FIRST WOMAN [*coming forward*]: I do.

PRAXAGORA: Come on, then, garland yourself; the job's been started now. [*First Woman puts on the second garland.*] Now look,
150 make sure that you speak man's language and speak well, and lean hard with your body on your stick.

FIRST WOMAN [*taking the platform*]: I would have wished that someone else, one of the regular speakers, had given the best advice, so that I could have sat quiet. But as it is, so far as in me lies, I will not
155 stand for the installation in taverns of storage-pits for water! I think it's wrong, by the Two Goddesses!

PRAXAGORA: By the Two Goddesses, you fool? Where have you put your brain?

FIRST WOMAN: What's wrong? I certainly didn't ask you for a drink!

PRAXAGORA: No, but you swore by the Two Goddesses when you were being a *man* – although *otherwise* you spoke very skilfully indeed.

160 FIRST WOMAN: Oh, yes, by Apollo—

PRAXAGORA: So stop; because I'm not going to put one foot in front of the other to go to the Assembly, unless these things are got exactly right.

[*As First Woman returns to her place, Second Woman eagerly comes forward again.*]

SECOND WOMAN: Give me the garland. I'm going to have another turn at speaking. I think I've practised it properly now.
165 [*Mounting the platform, and putting on the first garland*] In my opinion, ladies of the Assembly—

PRAXAGORA: Again, you wretch? You're calling the men "ladies"!

- Γυ.^β δι' Ἐπίγονόν γ' ἑκεινονί· βλέψασα γὰρ
 ἔκεισε πρὸς γυναῖκας ψόμην λέγειν.
 Πρ. ἄπερρε καὶ σὺ καὶ κάθησ' ἐντευθενί.
 αὐτὴ γὰρ ὑμῶν γ' ἔνεκά μοι λέξειν δοκῶ 170
 τονδὶ λαβοῦσα. τοῖς θεοῖς μὲν εὐχομαι
 τυχεῖν κατορθώσασα τὰ βεβουλευμένα.
 ἐμοὶ δ' ἴσον μὲν τῆσδε τῆς χώρας μέτα
 ὅσονπερ ὑμῖν· ἄχθομαι δὲ καὶ φέρω
 τὰ τῆς πολέως ἅπαντα βαρέως πράγματα. 175
 ὀρῶ γὰρ αὐτὴν προστάταισι χρωμένῃν
 ἀεὶ πονηροῖς· κἂν τις ἡμέραν μίαν
 χρηστὸς γένηται, δέκα πονηρὸς γίγνεται.
 ἐπέτρεψας ἐτέρῳ; πλείον' ἔτι δράσει κακά.
 χαλεπὸν μὲν οὖν ἄνδρας δυσaráστοις νουθετεῖν, 180
 οἳ τοὺς φιλεῖν μὲν βουλομένους δεδοίκατε,
 τοὺς δ' οὐκ ἐθέλοντας ἀντιβολεῖθ' ἐκάστοτε.
 ἐκκλησίαισιν ἦν ὅτ' οὐκ ἐχρώμεθα
 οὐδὲν τὸ παράπαν· ἀλλὰ τόν γ' Ἀγύρριον
 πονηρὸν ἡγοῦμεσθα. νῦν δὲ χρωμένων 185
 ὁ μὲν λαβὼν ἀργύριον ὑπερεπήνεσεν,
 ὁ δ' οὐ λαβὼν εἶναι θανάτου φήσ' ἀξίους
 τοὺς μισθοφορεῖν ζητοῦντας ἐν τήκκλησίᾳ.
 Γυ.^α νῆ τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, εὖ γε ταυταγὶ λέγεις.
 Πρ. τάλαιν', Ἀφροδίτην ὤμοσας; χαρίεντά γ' ἂν 190
 ἔδρασας, εἰ τοῦτ' εἶπας ἐν τήκκλησίᾳ.
 Γυ.^α ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν εἶπον.
 Πρ. μηδ' ἐθίζου νῦν λέγειν.
 τὸ συμμαχικὸν αὖ τοῦθ', ὅτ' ἐσκοπούμεθα,
 εἰ μὴ γένοιτ', ἀπολεῖν ἔφασκον τὴν πόλιν·
 ὅτε δὴ δ' ἐγένετ', ἤχθοντο, τῶν δὲ ῥητόρων 195
 ὁ τοῦτ' ἀναπείσας εὐθὺς ἀποδρὰς ὥχето.
 ναῦς δεῖ καθέλκειν· τῷ πένητι μὲν δοκεῖ,
 τοῖς πλουσίοις δὲ καὶ γεωργοῖς οὐ δοκεῖ.

167 ἑκεινονί· βλέψασα Elmsley: ἑκείνον· ἐπιβλέψασα (εἶ τι βλ· R^{ac}Λ^{ac}) codd.:
 ἐπιβλέψας (beginning of citation) Suda ε2268.

170 γ' ΓΛ: om. R: [A]

172 κατορθώσασα RΛ: κατορθώσας ΑΓ: κατορθώσασι Richards.

190 ὤμοσας Dobree: ὠνόμασας RAL: γ' ὠνόμασας Γ.

SECOND WOMAN [*pointing into the audience*]: That was because of Epigonus over there. I looked over that way, and it made me think I was speaking to women.

170 PRAXAGORA: Be off with you too, and sit down, away from here! [*Second Woman retires.*] If this is what you lot are like, I think I'm going to take this and speak. [*She takes up the first garland and holds it up over the altar.*] I pray to the gods that I may succeed in bringing our plans to fruition. [*Putting on the garland, and addressing both the women and the theatre audience*] I have as much of a stake in
175 this country as you do; and I am vexed and grieved at the whole situation the City is in. I see her employing leaders who are always villains: even if one of them acts decently for a day, he then behaves wickedly for ten. You try entrusting your affairs to someone else? He'll do even more
180 harm! Well, it is difficult to advise men who are so hard to please, men who are afraid of those who want to be their friends and are for ever on their knees to those who *don't* want to. There was a time when we didn't
185 have Assemblies at all; but at least we thought that Agyrrhius was a villain. Now, when we do have them, whoever has received cash praises him to the skies, while whoever hasn't had any says that those who try to treat the Assembly as a wage-earning job deserve to be put to death.

FIRST WOMAN: By Aphrodite, that's well said!

190 PRAXAGORA: Swearing by Aphrodite, you fool? A nice thing you'd have done if you'd said that at the Assembly!

FIRST WOMAN: But I wouldn't have said it there.

PRAXAGORA: Well, don't get *now* into the *habit* of saying it. -- Again, this Alliance: when we were considering making it, they said that
195 if it didn't come off, it would mean the end of the City; then, when it did come off, they were annoyed, and all at once the politician who had induced us to make it ran off and disappeared. We need to launch a fleet: the poor man says yes, the rich and the farmers say no. Now you get

- Κορινθίοις ἄχθεσθε, κάκείνοί γε σοί·
 νῦν εἰσὶ χρηστοί - "καὶ σὺ νῦν χρηστὸς γενοῦ". 200
 ἀργεῖος ἀμαθής· ἀλλ' Ἱερώνυμος σοφός.
 σωτηρία παρέκυψεν· ἀλλ' ὀργίζεται
 Θρασύβουλος αὐτὸς οὐχὶ παρακαλούμενος.
 Γυ.^α ὥς ξυνετὸς ἀνὴρ.
 Πρ. νῦν καλῶς ἐπήνεσας.
 ὑμεῖς γὰρ ἐστ', ὦ δῆμε, τούτων αἴτιοι. 205
 τὰ δημόσια γὰρ μισθοφοροῦντες χρήματα
 ἰδίᾳ σκοπεῖσθ' ἕκαστος ὃ τι τις κερδανεῖ·
 τὸ δὲ κοινὸν ὥσπερ Αἴσιμος κυλίνδεται.
 ἦν οὖν ἐμοὶ πείθησθε, σωθήσεσθ' ἔτι.
 ταῖς γὰρ γυναιξὶ φημι χρῆναι τὴν πόλιν 210
 ἡμᾶς παραδοῦναι. καὶ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς οἰκίαις
 ταύταις ἐπιτρόποις καὶ ταμίαισι χρώμεθα.
 Γυ.^β εὔ γ', εὔ γε νῆ Δί', εὔ γε.
 Γυ.^α λέγε, λέγ', ὦγαθέ.
 Πρ. ὥς δ' εἰσὶν ἡμῶν τοὺς τρόπους βελτίονες
 ἐγὼ διδάξω. πρῶτα μὲν γὰρ τᾶρια 215
 βάπτουσι θερμῷ κατὰ τὸν ἀρχαῖον νόμον
 ἀπαξάπασαι, κοῦχὶ μεταπειρωμένας
 ἴδοις ἂν αὐτάς· ἡ δ' Ἀθηναίων πόλις,
 εἰ τοῦτο χρηστῶς εἶχεν, οὐκ ἂν ἐσώζετο,
 εἰ μὴ τι καινόν γ' ἄλλο περιηργάζετο. 220
 καθημέναι φρύγουσιν ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ·
 ἐπὶ τῆς κεφαλῆς φέρουσιν ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ·
 τὰ Θεσμοφόρι' ἄγουσιν ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ· 223a
 πέττουσι τοὺς πλακοῦντας ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ· 223b
 τοὺς ἄνδρας ἐπιτρίβουσιν ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ·
 μοιχοὺς ἔχουσιν ἔνδον ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ· 225
 αὐταῖς παροψωνοῦσιν ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ·
 οἶνον φιλοῦσ' εὐζωρον ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ·
 βινούμεναι χαίρουσιν ὥσπερ καὶ πρὸ τοῦ.
 ταύταισιν οὖν, ὦνδρες, παραδόντες τὴν πόλιν
- 199 ἄχθεσθε ΑΓΛ: ἄχθεσθαι R: ἤχθεσθε Reiske.
 202 ὀργίζεται Hermann: ορείζεται R: ὀρίζεται Λ: οὐχ ὀρίζεται ΑΓ.
 219 εἰ τοῦτο codd. Suda: εἴ πού τι Dobree.
 220 καινόν γ' Wilson: καινὸν RAL: κακὸν Γ.
 227 οἶνον φιλοῦσ' εὐζωρον Hanow: τὸν οἶνον εὐζωρον φιλοῦσ' (φιλοῦσιν ΑΓ) codd.

200 annoyed with the Corinthians, and so do they with you; now they're decent chaps, and you're told you should be decent too now. The Argives are stupid; but Hieronymus is sensible. We get a glimpse of salvation; but Thrasybulus is furious because *he* isn't invited to take charge.

FIRST WOMAN: Smart man, this!

PRAXAGORA: Now *that's* the right way to praise the speaker. —
 205 You, the people, you are the cause of all this. You take public money in wages, and you each look out for a way to gain a profit for yourselves, while the public interest gets kicked around like Aesimus. Now then, if
 210 you listen to my advice, you will yet be able to win through. I say that we should hand over the City to the women. After all, we already employ them as managers and controllers of our households.

SECOND WOMAN: Bravo, bravo! Bravo, by Zeus!

FIRST WOMAN: More, more! Good man!

214–5 PRAXAGORA: I will also show that they have better qualities than we do. In the first place, they maintain, one and all, their ancient custom of dyeing wool in hot water, and you won't ever see them experimenting with anything different; whereas the Athenian state, if that was
 220 satisfactory, wouldn't want to preserve it — quite the contrary, they'd be pointlessly busying themselves with some innovation or other. Women parch corn sitting on their haunches, just like in the old days. They carry things on their heads, just like in the old days. They keep the Thesmophoria just like in the old days. They bake their flat-cakes just like in the old days. They make life hell for their husbands just like in
 225 the old days. They keep lovers in the house just like in the old days. They buy extra food for themselves just like in the old days. They like good strong wine just like in the old days. They enjoy getting fucked just like in the old days. So, gentlemen, let us hand over the City to them;

- μὴ περιλαλῶμεν, μηδὲ πυνθανώμεθα 230
 τί ποτ' ἄρα δρᾶν μέλλουσιν, ἀλλ' ἀπλῶ τρόπῳ
 ἐῷμεν ἄρχειν, σκεψάμενοι ταυτὶ μόνα,
 ὥς τοὺς στρατιώτας πρῶτον οὔσαι μητέρες
 σῶζειν ἐπιθυμήσουσιν· εἴτα σιτία
 τίς τῆς τεκούσης θάπτον ἐπιπέμψειεν ἄν; 235
 χρήματα πορίζειν δ' εὐπορώτατον γυνή,
 ἄρχουσά τ' οὐκ ἂν ἐξαπατηθεῖη ποτέ·
 αὐταὶ γάρ εἰσιν ἐξαπατᾶν εἰθισμέναι.
 τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἐάσω. ταῦτ' ἐὰν πείθησθέ μοι,
 εὐδαιμονοῦντες τὸν βίον διάξετε. 240
- Γυ.³ εἰ γ' ὦ γλυκυτάτη Πραξαγόρα, καὶ δεξιῶς.
 πόθεν, ὦ τάλαινα, ταῦτ' ἔμαθες οὕτω καλῶς;
 Πρ. ἐν ταῖς φυγαῖς μετὰ τάνδρὸς ὥκησ' ἐν Πυκνί·
 ἔπειτ' ἀκούουσ' ἐξέμαθον τῶν ῥητόρων.
 Γυ.^a οὐκ ἐτὸς ἄρ', ὦ μέλ', ἦσθα δεινὴ καὶ σοφή· 245
 καὶ σε στρατηγὸν αἱ γυναῖκες αὐτόθεν
 αἰρούμεθ', ἦν ταῦθ' ἀπινοεῖς κατεργάσῃ.
 ἀτὰρ ἦν Κέφαλός σοι λοιδορῆται προσφθαρεῖς,
 πῶς ἀντερεῖς πρὸς αὐτὸν ἐν τήκκλησίᾳ;
 Πρ. φήσω παραφρονεῖν αὐτόν.
 Γυ.^a ἀλλὰ τοῦτό γε 250
 ἴσασι πάντες.
- Πρ. ἀλλὰ καὶ μελαγχολᾶν.
 Γυ.^a καὶ τοῦτ' ἴσασιν.
 Πρ. ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰ τρύβλια
 κακῶς κεραμεύειν, τὴν δὲ πόλιν εἰ καὶ καλῶς.
 Γυ.^a τί δ', ἦν Νεοκλείδης ὁ γλάμων σε λοιδορῇ;
 Πρ. τούτῳ μὲν εἶπον εἰς κυνὸς πυγὴν ὁρᾶν. 255
 Γυ.^a τί δ', ἦν ὑποκρούωσίν σε;
 Πρ. προσκινήσομαι,
 ἄτ' οὐκ ἄπειρος οὔσα πολλῶν κρουμάτων.
 Γυ.^a ἐκεῖνο μόνον ἄσκεπτον, εἴ σ' οἱ τοξόται
- 234 εἴτα Λ: εἰ τα R: εἰ τὰ ΑΓ: τὰ (beginning of citation) Suda.
 235 θάπτον Λ³ Suda: μάλλον RΓΛ: [A].
 236 πορίζειν δ' Velsen: πορίζειν codd.
 239 ταῦτ' ἐὰν Bergk: ταῦτα κᾶν vel sim. RΛ: κᾶν Γ: [A].
 244 ἔπειτ' codd.: ἐκεῖ τ' Dindorf.
 255 εἶπον RΑΓΛ Σ *Ach.* 863: εἶπω Suda (τ844): εἴποιμ' B: ἂν εἴποιμ' Brunck.
 256 ὑποκρου- R Suda ¹Σ^{RA} ²Σ^R: ὑποκρούσ- ΑΓΛ.

230 let's not indulge in unnecessary chatter, nor inquire of them what it is
 they actually mean to do, but quite simply let them govern. Consider
 only these points: in the first place, being the mothers of our soldiers,
 234-5 they will be anxious to secure their safety; then again, who would be
 quicker than their mother to send them extra supplies? There is nothing
 more resourceful than a women when it comes to finding financial
 resources, and when in power she's never going to be deceived, because
 women are so used to being deceivers themselves. The rest of what I
 240 might say I will pass over. If you follow this advice of mine, you will live
 happily ever after. [*Acclamation.*]

SECOND WOMAN: Bravo, Praxagora, my sweet! How clever!
 Where did you learn that stuff so well, my dear?

PRAXAGORA: In the refugee time I lived with my husband on the
 Pnyx; that enabled me to listen to the speakers and learn off their tricks.

245 FIRST WOMAN: No wonder you were so skilful and expert, my
 good friend! And now [*looking round the gathering to indicate that she
 is seeking its support*] we women here and now elect you to be general if
 you succeed in this plan of yours. [*All raise their hands in approval.*]
 But in the Assembly, if that blasted Cephalus comes up and starts abusing
 you, how will you respond to him?

250 PRAXAGORA: I'll say he's off his rocker.

FIRST WOMAN: But everyone knows *that* already!

PRAXAGORA: Then I'll say he's completely barmy.

FIRST WOMAN: They know that as well.

PRAXAGORA: Then I'll say he makes his pots shoddily – but that
 he's making the City go to pot all right, good and proper!

FIRST WOMAN: But what if that bleary-eyed Neocleides abuses
 you?

255 PRAXAGORA [*making an insulting gesture*]: My advice to *him* is
 to look up a dog's arse!

FIRST WOMAN: What if they interrupt and try to knock you off
 your stride?

PRAXAGORA [*making suggestive pelvic motions*]: I'll thrust back;
 I've got substantial and varied experience as far as *knocking* goes!

FIRST WOMAN: There's only one thing we haven't considered: if

ἔλκωσιν, ὃ τι δράσεις ποτ'.

- Πρ. ἔξαγκωνιῷ
ὠδί· μέση γὰρ οὐδέποτε ληφθήσομαι. 260
- Γυ.^α ἡμεῖς δέ γ', ἦν αἴρωσ', ἐὰν κελεύσομεν.
Γυ.^β ταυτὶ μὲν ἡμῖν ἐντεθύμηται καλῶς·
ἐκείνο δ' οὐ πεφροντίκαμεν, ὅτῳ τρόπῳ
τὰς χεῖρας αἶρειν μιημονεύσομεν τότε.
εἰθισμένοι γάρ ἐσμεν αἶρειν τῷ σκέλει. * 265
- Πρ. χαλεπὸν τὸ πρᾶγμ'· ὅμως δέ χειροτονητέον
ἐξωμιάσαις τὸν ἕτερον βραχίονα.
ἄγε νυν, ἀναστέλλεσθ' ἄνω τὰ χιτῶνια·
ὑποδείσθε δ' ὡς τάχιστα τὰς Λακωνικάς,
ὥσπερ τὸν ἄνδρ' ἐθεᾶσθ', ὅτ' εἰς ἐκκλησίαν 270
μέλλοι βαδίζειν ἢ θύραζ' ἐκάστοτε.
ἔπειτ', ἐπειδὴν ταῦτα πάντ' ἔχη καλῶς,
περιδείσθε τοὺς πώγωνας. ἥνίκ' ἂν δέ γε
τούτους ἀκριβώσητε περιηρμοσμένοι,
καὶ θαῖμάτια τάνδρεϊ', ἅπερ γ' ἐκλέψατε, 275
ἐπαναβάλεσθε, κᾶτα ταῖς βακτηρίαις
ἐπερειδόμεναι βαδίζετ' ἄδουσαι μέλος
πρεσβυτικόν τι, τὸν τρόπον μιμούμεναι
τὸν τῶν ἀγροίκων.
- Χο. εὖ λέγεις.
- Πρ. ἡμεῖς δέ γε
προΐωμεν αὐτῶν· καὶ γὰρ ἑτέρας οἶομαι 280
ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν εἰς τὴν Πύκν' ἤξειν ἄντικρυς
γυναίκας. ἀλλὰ σπεύσαθ' ὡς εἴωθ' ἐκεῖ
τοῖς μὴ παροῦσιν ὀρθροῖς † ἐς τὴν Πύκνα† *
ὑπαποτρέχειν ἔχουσι μηδὲ πάτταλον.
- Χο. ὦρα προβαίνειν, ὦνδρες, ἡμῖν ἐστι· τοῦτο γὰρ χρῆ 285

264 τομεν τότε codd.: τομέν ποτε Ussher.

275 τάνδρεϊ' ἅπερ γ' Elmsley: τάνδρεϊά γ' ἅπερ (A: τ' ἅπερ RΓ, τάπερ Λ) codd.

276 ἐπαναβάλεσθε B Σ^{RA} ¹Suda¹, Zonaras: ἐπαναβάλεσθαι ¹Suda^A: ἐπαναβάλλεσθε RAG:
ἐπανεβάλλεσθε Λ: ἐπαναβάλλησθε Denniston.

281 πύκν' Λ: πνύκ' R: πνύχ' AΓ.

283 ὀρθροῖς Γ^{PO}Λ Suda¹: ὀρθροῖσιν Γ^{ac}: ὀρθλοῖς R Suda^G.

283 † ἐς τὴν πύκνα† (πνύκα Γ Suda) codd. Suda: «ἄρχων λέγειν» e.g. van Leeuwen, cf. 289-292.

two of the archers start dragging you off, what, may I ask, will you do then?

260 PRAXAGORA: I'll do the elbow trick, like this [*making a sharp sideways thrust with both elbows*]; I'll never submit to being held in the middle!

FIRST WOMAN: And if they lift you off the ground, we'll ... tell them to leave you alone.

265 SECOND WOMAN: Well, we've taken all these things into account all right, but here's something we haven't thought of. How are we going to remember, come the vote, to raise our *hands*? We're so used to raising our *legs*!

PRAXAGORA: Difficult problem! But all the same, you must put your hands up, baring one arm from the shoulder. — [*As Praxagora successively gives the following orders, all the women complete their disguises as instructed, so far as they have not already done so.*] Now come on and shorten your underdresses; and put on your Laconians, quick
270 as you can, just as you've seen your husband do every time he was getting ready to go to the Assembly or go out anywhere. Then, when all that is in proper order, tie on your beards; and *when* you've fitted those on and
275 adjusted them precisely, then put on your men's cloaks as well, the ones that you stole, and then move off, leaning on your sticks and singing an old men's song, imitating the way country people act.

CHORUS-LEADER: Very good.

280 PRAXAGORA [*to First and Second Women, who have completed their preparations*]: And let's us go ahead of them, because I expect that there'll be other women from the countryside who'll come straight to the Pnyx. [*To the chorus, some of whom are not quite ready*] Now hurry up, because the practice up there is for <the magistrate to tell> those who haven't arrived before daybreak to slink away home without getting so much as a bean. [*She goes out, left, accompanied by First and Second Women.*]

285 CHORUS-LEADER [*as the chorus form up for their exit*]: It's time for us to be moving, *men* — for that's what we must always remember to

μεμνημένας αἰὲ λέγειν, μὴ καὶ ποτ' ἐξολίσθη
ἡμᾶς. ὁ κίνδυνος γὰρ οὐχὶ μικρός, ἦν ἀλώμεν
ἐνδυνάμεναι κατὰ σκότον τὸ λημμα τηλικούτον.

χωρῶμεν εἰς ἐκκλησίαν, ὦνδρες· ἠπείλησε γὰρ (στρ.
ὁ θεσμοθέτης, ὃς ἂν

μὴ πρὶ πάντων τοῦ κνέφους 290

ἦκη κεκοιμένος,
στέργων σκοροδάλμη,

βλέπων ὑπότριμμα, μὴ
δώσειν τὸ τριώβολον.

ἀλλ', ὦ Χαριτιμίδη
καὶ Σμίκυθε καὶ Δράκης,
ἔπου κατεπείγων,

σαυτῷ προσέχων ὅπως
μηδὲν παραχορδιεῖς
ὦν δεῖ σ' ἀποδεῖξαι. 295

ὅπως δὲ τὸ σύμβολον
λαβόντες εἶτα πλη-
σίοι καθεδούμεθ', ὥς
ἂν χειροτονῶμεν
ἅπανθ', ὅπόσ' ἂν δέη
τὰς ἡμετέρας φίλας--
καίτοι τί λέγω; φίλους
γὰρ χρῆν μ' ὀνομάζειν. 299

ὄρα δ' ὅπως ὠθήσομεν τούσδε τοὺς ἐξ ἄστεως (ἀντ.

ἥκοντας, ὅσοι πρὸ τοῦ
μέν, ἡνίκ' ἔδει λαβεῖν * 301

ἐλθόντ' ὀβολὸν μόνον,
καθῆντο λαλοῦντες

ἐν τοῖς στεφανώμασιν,
νυνὶ δ' ἐνοχλοῦσ' ἄγαν.

286 μὴ καὶ ποτ' Dobree: ὥς μήποτ' codd. Suda.

288 ἐνδυνάμεναι Le Febvre, cf. Σ^Α: ἐνδυνάμεναι codd.

291-2 στέργων σκοροδάλμη, βλέπων ὑπότριμμα Porson: βλέπων ὑπότριμμα· στέργων
σκοροδάλμη codd. Suda.

293 Χαριτιμίδη Bentley: χαριτιμία ἢ vel sim. codd.

295 ἀποδεῖξαι codd. Suda: ἐπιδείξαι Ussher.

301-2 ἔδει λαβεῖν ἐλθόντ' Dawes: ἐλθόντ' ἔδει λαβεῖν R^{pc}Λ: ἐλθόντα δεῖ λαβεῖν R^{ac}:
ἐλθόντες ἔδει λαβεῖν Γ.

say, to make sure it never slips our minds. We're running no small risk, if we're caught taking on an undercover venture of this magnitude.

CHORUS [*circling the orchestra*]:

- 290 Let's go to the Assembly, men! Because the magistrate
has issued a warning that if anyone
doesn't come good and early,
when it's still dark, covered with dust,
content with a pickled-garlic breakfast
and with a *sauce piquante* look in his eye,
he won't give him his three obols.
So, Charitimides
and Smicythus and Draces,
follow us, be quick,
and take great care to avoid
295 striking any wrong note
in the display you've got to make.
And when we've got our tickets,
then we must make sure
we sit close together,
so that we can vote to approve
all of the measures
our sisters may need—
only, what am I saying? I should
have called them our *brethren*.
- 300 Make sure we thrust aside these folk coming
from town, all those who previously,
when the fee due for coming along
was only one obol,
used to sit down and chat
among the garland stalls,
but who *now* make themselves a thorough nuisance!

ἀλλ' οὐχί, Μυρωνίδης
 ὅτ' ἦρχεν ὁ γεννάδας,
 οὐδείς ἂν ἐτόλμα
 τὰ τῆς πόλεως διοι-
 κεῖν ἀργύριον φέρων·
 ἀλλ' ἦκεν ἕκαστος
 ἐν ἀσκιδίῳ φέρων
 πιεῖν ἅμα τ' ἄρτον αὐ-
 τὸς καὶ δύο κρομμύω
 καὶ τρεῖς ἂν ἐλάσας.
 νυνὶ δὲ τριώβολον
 ζητοῦσι λαβεῖν, ὅταν
 πράττωσί τι κοινόν, ὥς-
 περ πηλοφοροῦντες.

305

310

ΒΛΕΠΥΡΟΣ

τί τὸ πρᾶγμα; ποῖ ποθ' ἡ γυνὴ φρούδη ἵστί μοι;
 ἐπεὶ πρὸς ἔω νῦν γ' ἐστίν, ἡ δ' οὐ φαίνεται.
 ἐγὼ δὲ κατάκειμαι πάλαι χεζητιῶν,
 τὰς ἐμβάδας ζητῶν λαβεῖν ἐν τῷ σκότῳ
 καὶ θοίματιον. ὅτε δὴ δ' ἐκεῖνο ψηλαφῶν
 οὐκ ἐδυνάμην εὑρεῖν, ὁ δ' ἤδη τὴν θύραν
 ἐπέιχε κρούων μοῦ Κόπρειος, λαμβάνω
 τουτὶ τὸ τῆς γυναικὸς ἡμιδιπλοίδιον,
 καὶ τὰς ἐκείνης Περσικὰς ὑφέλκομαι.
 ἀλλ' ἐν καθαρῷ ποῦ ποῦ τις ἂν χέσας τύχοι;
 ἢ πανταχοῦ τοι νυκτός ἐστιν ἐν καλῷ·
 οὐ γάρ με νῦν χέζοντά γ' οὐδείς ὄψεται.
 οἴμοι κακοδαίμων, ὅτι γέρων ὦν ἡγόμην
 γυναιχ'· ὅσας εἴμ' ἄξιος πληγὰς λαβεῖν.
 οὐ γάρ ποθ' ὑγιὲς οὐδὲν ἐξελήλυθεν
 δράσουσ'. ὅμως δ' οὔν ἐστιν ἀποπατητέον.

315

320

325

ΓΕΙΤΩΝ

τίς ἐστίν; οὐ δῆπου Βλέπυρος ὁ γειτνιῶν;
 νῆ τὸν Δί' αὐτὸς δῆτ' ἐκεῖνος. εἰπέ μοι,
 τί τοῦτό σοι τὸ πυρρόν ἐστιν; οὐ τί που

307 αὐτὸς Sommerstein: αὐ R: αὐ Λ: om. Γ: αὐτῷ Velsen: αὐτον Reiske.

316 ὁ δ' Küster: ὅδ' codd.

317 μοῦ Κόπρειος Blaydes. cf. 912: ὁ κοπρεαῖος RL: ὁ κοπραῖος Γ.

It wasn't like this when the noble
 Myronides was general:
 no one then would have had the audacity
 305 to draw pay for managing
 the City's affairs.
 No, everyone would come
 bringing for himself
 a drink in a little leather flask, and also
 a loaf, two onions
 and three olives.
 But *now* they expect
 to get three obols when they
 310 do something for the common good, as if
 they were builders' labourers!

*[The chorus follow Praxagora and her colleagues out. Presently
 Blepyrus comes out of Praxagora's house. He is wearing his wife's yellow
 underdress and a pair of soft woman's ankle-shoes, and is apparently in
 some physical distress. He looks up and down the street as if searching
 for someone.]*

BLEPYRUS: What's happened? Where on earth has my wife gone
 off to? It's getting on for sunrise now, and she's nowhere to be found.
 I've been lying awake for a long time, needing a crap, and trying to find
 315 my shoes and cloak in the dark. When finally, after a lot of groping
 around, I just couldn't find it, and meanwhile the man from Shittington
 kept on knocking at my door, I took this semi-foldover of my wife's and
 320 pulled on her Persian slippers. *[Looking around]* Now let me see, where
 will one be able to shit in privacy? Why, you know, at night *anywhere* is
 OK; nobody is going to see me shitting *now*! Dash it all, why did I go and
 325 get married at such an age? I really deserve a sound thrashing! She's
 certainly up to no good, going out like that. Anyway, I'd better relieve
 myself.

*[He squats down, close to the house to the right of his own. He
 strains hard, but succeeds only in breaking wind. At this his neighbour
 appears, half-dressed, at an upstairs window.]*

NEIGHBOUR *[calling down]*: Who's that? Not, surely, my
 neighbour Blepyrus? *[To himself]* Why, by Zeus, that's just who it is. *[To*
 330 *Blepyrus]* Tell me, what's that yellow you've got on you? Cinesias hasn't

Κινησίας σοι κατατετίληκεν;

Βλ. πόθεν; * 330

οὔκ, ἀλλὰ τῆς γυναικὸς ἐξελήλυθα
τὸ κροκωτίδιον ἀμπισχόμενος οὐνδύεται.

Γε. τὸ δ' ἱμάτιόν σου ποῦ ὅστιν;

Βλ. οὐκ ἔχω φράσαι·

ζητῶν γὰρ αὐτ' οὐχ ἦϋρον ἐν τοῖς στρώμασιν.

Γε. εἴτ' οὐδὲ τὴν γυναικ' ἐκέλευσάς σοι φράσαι; * 335

Βλ. μὰ τὸν Δί'· οὐ γὰρ ἔνδον οὔσα τυγχάνει,

ἀλλ' ἐκτετρύπηκέ· λαθοῦσά μ' ἔνδοθεν·

ὃ καὶ δέδοικα μή τι δρᾷ νεώτερον.

Γε. νῆ τὸν Ποσειδῶ, ταῦτά τοίνυν ἀντικρυς
ἐμοὶ πέποιθας. καὶ γὰρ ἦ ξύνειμ' ἐγὼ 340

φρούδη 'στ' ἔχουσα θοῖμάτιον οὐγὼ φόρουν.

κοῦ τοῦτο λυπεῖ μ', ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἐμβάδας·

οὔκουν λαβεῖν γ' αὐτὰς ἐδυνάμην οὔδαμου.

Βλ. μὰ τὸν Διόνυσον, οὐδ' ἐγὼ γὰρ τὰς ἐμὰς
Λακωνικάς· ἀλλ' ὥς ἔτυχον χεζητιῶν, 345

εἰς τῷ κοθόρνῳ τῷ πόδ' ἐνθεῖς ἵεμαι,

ἵνα μὴ ἡχέσαιμ' εἰς τὴν σισύραν· φανὴ γὰρ ἦν.

Γε. τί δῆτ' ἂν εἴη; μῶν ἐπ' ἄριστον γυνή

κέκληκεν αὐτὴν τῶν φίλων;

Βλ. γνώμην γ' ἐμήν.

οὔκουν πονηρά γ' ἐστίν, ὃ τι καὶ εἶδέναι.

Γε. ἀλλὰ σὺ μὲν ἱμονίαν τιν' ἀποπατεῖς· ἐμοὶ δ' 350

ῥα βαδίζειν ἐστὶν εἰς ἐκκλησίαν,

ἥνπερ λάβω θοῖμάτιον, ὅπερ ἦν μοι μόνον.

Βλ. καὶ γὰρ, ἐπειδὴν ἀποπατήσω· νῦν δέ μοι * 355

ἀχράς τις ἐγκλήσας ἔχει τὰ σιτία.

Γε. μῶν ἦν Θρασύβουλος εἶπε τοῖς Λακωνικοῖς;

Βλ. νῆ τὸν Διόνυσον· ἐνέχεται γοῦν μοι σφόδρα.

ἀτὰρ τί δράσω; καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ τοῦτό με

μόνον τὸ λυποῦν ἐστίν, ἀλλ' ὅταν φάγω,

ὅποι βαδιεῖται μοι τὸ λοιπὸν ἢ κόπρος. 360

νῦν μὲν γὰρ οὗτος βεβαλάνωκε τὴν θύραν,

332 κροκωτίδιον Arnaldus; κροκώτιον R; κροκώπιον ΓΛ.

335 ἐκέλευσάς B; ἐκέλευσά RΓΛ.

354 νῦν B; νυνὶ RΓΛ.

354 μοι Meineke; μου codd.

by any chance been shitting over you, has he?

BLEPYRUS: What are you blethering about? No, I've come out wearing my wife's little saffron number that she usually puts on.

NEIGHBOUR: Why, where's your cloak?

BLEPYRUS: Can't say. I looked for it among the bedclothes, but couldn't find it.

335 NEIGHBOUR: So didn't you ask your wife to tell you where it was?

BLEPYRUS: Couldn't. She's not actually at home; she's sneaked out of the house without my noticing. It makes me fear she may be doing something untoward.

340 NEIGHBOUR: By Poseidon, then you've had exactly the same happen to you as I have. My other half's vanished too, and she's got the cloak that I always wear. And that doesn't annoy me so much, but she's taken my shoes too; at any rate I haven't been able to find them anywhere.

345 BLEPYRUS: I couldn't find my Laconians either, by Dionysus; so when I felt I needed a crap, I thrust my feet into her soft boots and rushed out, so as not to soil my blanket – it was fresh clean.

NEIGHBOUR: Well, what can it be? It couldn't, could it, be some woman friend of hers who's invited her for lunch?

350 BLEPYRUS: I expect that's it. She's not a bad type, after all, not that I know of.

NEIGHBOUR: Well, *you* seem to be shitting a cable, and it's time for *me* to go to the Assembly – so long as I find my cloak; it was the only one I had. [*He withdraws from the window.*]

355 BLEPYRUS [*calling up to him*]: I will too, once I've finished relieving myself; at the moment there's a sort of wild pear that's keeping my food locked inside.

NEIGHBOUR [*briefly popping his head out again*]: Not the one that Thrasybulus told the Spartans about?

360 BLEPYRUS: Yes, indeed, by Dionysus; at any rate it's taking a very hostile attitude to me! – But what am I to do? The thing is, what's more, it's not just *this* that's bothering me; it's that when I eat in future, where is the end-product going to go? At the moment this fellow from Pearswick, whoever he is, has bolted and barred the door! [*Appealing to*

ὅστις ποτ' ἔσθ', ἄνθρωπος ἀχραδούσιος.
 τίς ἂν οὖν Ιατρὸν μοι μετέλθοι, καὶ τίνα;
 τίς τῶν κατὰ πρωκτὸν δεινὸς ἐστὶ τὴν τέχνην;
 ἄρ' οἶδ' Ἀμύνων; ἀλλ' ἴσως ἀρνήσεται. 365
 Ἀντισθένη τις καλεσάτω πάσῃ τέχνῃ·
 οὗτος γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἔνεκά γε στεναγμάτων
 οἶδεν τί πρωκτὸς βούλεται χεζητιῶν.
 ὦ πότνι' Ἰλείθια, μή με περιίδῃς
 διαρραγέντα μηδὲ βεβαλανωμένον, 370
 ἵνα μὴ γένωμαι σκωραμὶς κωμωδική.

ΧΡΕΜΗΣ

οὗτος, τί ποιεῖς; οὐ τί που χέζεις;
 Βλ. ἐγώ;
 οὐ δῆτ' ἔτι γε, μὰ τὸν Δί', ἀλλ' ἀνίσταμαι.
 Χρ. τὸ τῆς γυναικὸς δ' ἀμπέχει χιτῶνιον;
 Βλ. ἐν τῷ σκότῳ γὰρ τοῦτ' ἔτυχον ἔνδον λαβών. 375
 ἀτὰρ πόθεν ἦκεις ἐτεόν;
 Χρ. ἐξ ἐκκλησίας.
 Βλ. ἤδη λέλυται γάρ;
 Χρ. νῆ Δί' ὄρθριον μὲν οὖν.
 καὶ δῆτα πολὺν ἢ μίλτος, ὦ Ζεῦ φίλτατε,
 γέλων παρέσχευ, ἦν προσέρραινον κύκλῳ.
 Βλ. τὸ τριώβολον δῆτ' ἔλαβες;
 Χρ. εἰ γὰρ ὤφελον. 380
 ἀλλ' ὕστερος νῦν ἦλθον, ὥστ' αἰσχύνομαι.
 Βλ. μὰ τὸν Δί' οὐδέν' ἄλλον ἢ τὸν θύλακον.
 τὸ δ' αἷτιον τί;
 Χρ. πλεῖστος ἀνθρώπων ὄχλος,
 ὅσος οὐδεπώποτ', ἦλθ' ἀθρόος εἰς τὴν Πύκνα.

- 362 ἔσθ' ἄνθρωπος Blaydes, ἀχραδούσιος Brunck: ἔστ' ἄνθρ. Ἀχρ. vel sim. codd.:
 ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος Ἀχερδούσιος Stephanus of Byzantium 153.2.
 364 κατὰ πρωκτὸν B: κατὰ πρωκτῶν Γ: καταπρωκτῶν RΛ.
 365 ἄρ' codd.: ἀλλ' Meineke.
 366 Ἀντισθένη B Suda: Ἀντισθένην RΓΛ.
 369 Ἰλείθια Coulon, cf. Threatte i 342-3, ii 735, SEG xxxiii 167 e.ii.13: Εἰλήθια Σ^R:
 Εἰλείθια vel sim. codd. Suda Σ^A.
 381 ἀλλ' ὕστερος νῦν (Γ: νυνὶ Λ: νῆ Δί' R) ἦλθον codd.: (Βλ.) ἀλλ' ὕστερος ἦλθες;
 (Χρ.) νῆ Δί' Jackson.
 382 οὐδέν' ἄλλον RΓΛ: οὐδέν ἄλλον B: οὐδέν ἄλλο γ' Brunck: perh. οὐδένα γ'
 ἄλλον: Elmsley suspected a lacuna before 382 (ἀπρακτος ἦκων οἴκαδ'. (Βλ.)
 οὐδέν οἶν ἔχεις» e.g. van Leeuwen, giving 382 to Chremes).

the audience] Who will go and fetch a doctor for me – [*thinking aloud*]
 and what doctor? Who is there that's a real specialist in anal problems?
 365 Does Amynon know? But probably he won't admit it! [*Calling out*
again] Someone please, at all costs, summon Antisthenes! To judge by
 the way he groans, that man knows the meaning of an arsehole that's
 desperate to unburden itself. [*Raising his arms in prayer*] O Lady
 370 Hileithya, don't stand by and let me burst or stay blocked up like this; I
 don't want to become a comic shitpot!

[*Enter Chremes, from the left. Just as he arrives, Blepyrus appears to have found relief at last; he has just finished wiping his bottom (with a smooth stone) when Chremes comes up to him.*]

CHREMES: Here, you, what are you doing? Not shitting by any chance, are you?

BLEPYRUS [*rising*]: Me? No, no, not any more; I'm just getting up.

CHREMES: And you're wearing your wife's underdress?

375 BLEPYRUS: Yes, I picked it up by mistake, inside in the dark. But where have you come from, actually?

CHREMES: From the Assembly.

BLEPYRUS: You mean it's already over?

CHREMES: Already? It was finished before daylight! And – oh, dear Zeus! – it was so funny, the way they were showering that vermilion dye at people in all directions!

380 BLEPYRUS: Then you got your three obols?

CHREMES: If only I had! But in fact I came too late, which makes me feel really ashamed.

BLEPYRUS: Ashamed to face who? Your shopping-bag, that's all! But what was the reason?

385 CHREMES: An enormous throng of people, more than ever before, came in a solid mass to the Pnyx. And actually, seeing them, we

- καὶ δῆτα πάντας σκυτοτόμοις ἠκάζομεν 385
 ὀρῶντες αὐτούς· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλ' ὑπερφυῶς
 ὥς λευκοπληθῆς ἦν ἰδεῖν ἡκκλησία.
 ὥστ' οὐκ ἔλαβον οὐτ' αὐτὸς οὐτ' ἄλλοι συχνοί.
 Βλ. οὐδ' ἄρ' ἂν ἐγὼ λάβοιμι νῦν ἐλθών;
 Χρ. πόθεν;
 οὐδ' ἂν μὰ Δί' εἰ τότε ἦλθες, ὅτε τὸ δεύτερον 390
 ἀλεκτρυὼν ἐφθέγγετ'.
- Βλ. οἷμοι δείλαιος.
 'Αντίλοχ', ἀποίμωξόν με τοῦ τριωβόλου
 τὸν ζῶντα μᾶλλον· τὰμὰ γὰρ διοίχεται.
 ἀτὰρ τί τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἦν, ὅτι τοσοῦτον χρῆμ' ὄχλου
 οὕτως ἐν ὥρᾳ ξυνελέγη;
 Χρ. τί δ' ἄλλο γ' ἢ 395
 ἔδοξε τοῖς πρυτάνεσι περὶ σωτηρίας
 γνώμας προθεῖναι τῆς πόλεως; κᾶτ' εὐθέως
 πρῶτος Νεοκλείδης ὁ γλάμων παρείρπυσεν.
 κᾶπειθ' ὁ δῆμος ἀναβοᾷ πόσον δοκεῖς·
 "οὐ δεινὰ τολμᾷν τουτοῖν δημηγορεῖν, 400
 καὶ ταῦτα περὶ σωτηρίας προκειμένου,
 ὃς αὐτὸς αὐτῷ βλεφαρίδ' οὐκ ἐσώσατο;"
 ὁ δ' ἀναβοήσας καὶ περιβλέψας ἔφη·
 "τί δαί με χρὴ δρᾶν;" *
- Βλ. "σκόροδ' ὁμοῦ τρίψαντ' ὀπῶ,
 τιθύμαλλον ἐμβαλόντα τοῦ Λακωνικοῦ, 405
 σαυτοῦ παραλείφειν τὰ βλέφαρα τῆς ἐσπέρας",
 ἔγωγ' ἂν εἶπον, εἰ παρῶν ἐτύγχανον.
- Χρ. μετὰ τοῦτον Εὐαίων ὁ δεξιώτατος
 παρῆλθε γυμνός, ὥς ἐδόκει τοῖς πλείοσιν·
 αὐτὸς γέ μέντοῦφασκεν ἱμάτιον ἔχειν. 410
 κᾶπειτ' ἔλεξε δημοτικωτάτους λόγους·
 "ὁράτε μέν με δεόμενον σωτηρίας
 τετραστατήρου καὐτόν· ἄλλ' ὅμως ἐρῶ
 ὥς τὴν πόλιν καὶ τοὺς πολίτας σώσετε.

385 πάντας R Suda^A: πάντα Suda^F: πάντες ΓΛ.

390 ἂν μὰ Δί' εἰ van Leeuwen: εἰ μὰ Δία codd.

397 προθεῖναι Schömann: καθεῖναι codd.

403 ὁ δ' Küster: ὅδ' codd.

404 χρὴ RG: χρῆν Λ.

thought they all looked like shoemakers; it really was extraordinary how full of white faces the Assembly was to look at. The result was, I didn't get anything, and nor did lots of others.

BLEPYRUS: You mean, if I went now, I wouldn't get anything either?

390 CHREMES: What are you blethering about? Why, you wouldn't even have got anything if you'd gone at the time of the second cock-crow!

BLEPYRUS [*devastated*]: God help me! [*Brokenly, in tragic tones*]

Antilochus, mourn rather me that lives

Than my three obols: all I had is gone! —

395 But what was the reason why such an enormous crowd had gathered so early?

CHREMES: Why, what else but the Prytaneis deciding to set down for debate the subject of how to save the City? First of all, straight after the preliminaries, that bleary-eyed Neocleides edged his way to the platform. At that the public cries out, you can't imagine how loud, "Isn't
400 it shocking that this man should dare address the people, and that too when the debate is about saving the City, when he hasn't been able to save his own eyelids!" And he peered around him, lifted up his voice and said, "Well, what am I supposed to do about it?"

405 BLEPYRUS: "Pound together garlic and fig-juice, chuck in some spurge of the Laconian variety, and smear it on to your eyelids before going to bed"; that's what I'd have said, if I'd happened to be there.

CHREMES: After him that very clever speaker Euaeon came
410 forward, naked — or so he seemed to most people there; *he*, however, insisted that he was wearing a cloak. And he proceeded to deliver a speech full of the democratic spirit: "You can see that I could do with something to save *me* — something weighing about eight pounds; but all
415 the same I'll tell you the way you'll save the City and her citizens. If the

- ἦν γὰρ παρέχωσι τοῖς δεομένοις οἱ κναφῆς 415
 χλαῖνας, ἐπειδὴν πρῶτον ἥλιος τραπῇ,
 πλευρίτις ἡμῶν οὐδέν' ἂν λάβοι ποτέ.
 ὅσοις δὲ κλίνη μὴ ὅστις μηδὲ στρώματα,
 ἵεναι καθευδήσοντας ἀπονευιμμένους
 εἰς τῶν σκυλοδεψῶν· ἦν δ' ἀποκλήη τῇ θύρᾳ 420
 χειμῶνος ὄντος, τρεῖς σισύρας ὀφειλέτω."
- Βλ. νῆ τὸν Διόνυσον, χρηστά γ'· εἰ δ' ἐκεῖνό γε
 προσέθηκεν, οὐδεὶς ἀντεχειροτόνησεν ἄν,
 τοὺς ἀλφिताμοιβοὺς τοῖς ἀπόροις τρεῖς χοίνικας
 δειπνον παρέχειν ἅπασιν ἢ κλάειν μακρά, 425
 ἵνα τοῦτ' ἀπέλαυσαν Ναυσικύδους τάγαθόν.
- Χρ. μετὰ τοῦτο τοίνυν εὐπρεπῆς νεανίας
 λευκός τις ἀνεπήδησ' ὅμοιος Νικίᾳ
 δημηγορήσων, κάπεχειρσεν λέγειν
 ὥς χρή παραδοῦναι ταῖς γυναιξὶ τὴν πόλιν. 430
 εἶπ' ἐθορύβησαν κἀνέκραγον ὥς εὖ λέγοι,
 τὸ σκυτοτομικὸν πλῆθος, οἱ δ' ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν
 ἀνεβορβόρυξαν.
- Βλ. νοῦν γὰρ εἶχον, νῆ Δία.
 Χρ. ἀλλ' ἦσαν ἥττους. ὁ δὲ κατεῖχε τῇ βοῇ,
 τὰς μὲν γυναῖκας πόλλ' ἀγαθὰ λέγων, σὲ δὲ 435
 πολλὰ κακά.
- Βλ. καὶ τί εἶπε;
 Χρ. πρῶτον μὲν σ' ἔφη
 εἶναι πανοῦργον.
- Βλ. καὶ σέ;
 Χρ. μήπω τοῦτ' ἔρη.
 κἀπειτα κλέπτειν.
- Βλ. ἐμὲ μόνον;
 Χρ. καὶ νῆ Δία
 καὶ συκοφάντην.
- Βλ. ἐμὲ μόνον;
 Χρ. καὶ νῆ Δία
 τῶνδ' οὖν τὸ πλῆθος.
- Βλ. τίς δὲ τοῦτ' ἄλλως λέγει; 440
- 417 ἡμῶν codd.: ὑμῶν Suda.
 420 ἀποκλήη (ἀποκλείη) Le Febvre: ἀποκλίνη vel sim. codd. Suda.
 422 ἐκεῖνό van Leeuwen: ἐκεῖνά codd.: (δὲ) κἀκεῖνα Suda.

fullers, immediately after the turning of the sun, supply warm cloaks free to those who need them, then none of us should ever get pleurisy again. And all those who don't have a bed or bedding should be allowed, after
 420 washing their hands, to go to the tanners' shops to sleep; and if the tanner shuts the door against them in winter, let him be fined three fleecy blankets."

BLEPYRUS: Good stuff, by Dionysus! And if he'd added one thing more, there wouldn't have been a hand raised in opposition –
 424–5 namely, that the corn-dealers should supply all the poor with three quarts of corn each for dinner, or else they'd be well and truly for it. Then the people would get at least *that* much benefit out of Nausicydes!

CHREMES: Well, after that, a good-looking, white-faced young man, rather like Nicias, jumped up to make a speech; and he set himself
 430 to argue that the City ought to be handed over to the women. At that they cheered and shouted "Well said", did the shoemaking crowd; but the folk from the countryside raised a rumble of dissent.

BLEPYRUS: Very sensible of them too, by Zeus!

CHREMES: But they were outnumbered; and he dominated the
 435 meeting with his bellowing, saying a great deal in praise of women and a great deal in condemnation of you.

BLEPYRUS: And what did he say?

CHREMES: In the first place, that you were a villain.

BLEPYRUS: And you?

CHREMES: Ask me that in a moment. Secondly, that you were a thief.

BLEPYRUS: What, only me?

CHREMES: And also, by Zeus, an informer.

BLEPYRUS: What, only me?

CHREMES: And also, by Zeus, most of these people here
 440 [*indicating the audience*].

BLEPYRUS: Well, who doesn't agree with *that*?

- Χρ. γυναῖκα δ' εἶναι πρᾶγμ' ἔφη νουβυστικὸν
καὶ χρηματοποιόν. κοῦτε τ' ἀπόρρητ' ἔφη
ἐκ Θεσμοφόροι ἐκάστοτ' αὐτὰς ἐκφέρειν,
σὲ δὲ κάμ' ἐβουλεύοντε τοῦτο δρᾶν αἰεί.
- Βλ. καὶ νῆ τὸν Ἑρμῆν τοῦτό γ' οὐκ ἐψεύσατο. 445
- Χρ. ἔπειτα συμβάλλειν πρὸς ἀλλήλας ἔφη
ἱμάτια, χρυσί', ἀργύριον, ἐκπώματα,
μόνας μόναις, οὐ μαρτύρων ἐναντίον,
καὶ ταῦτ' ἀποφέρειν πάντα κοῦκ ἀποστρεφεῖν·
ἡμῶν δὲ τοὺς πολλοὺς ἔφασκε τοῦτο δρᾶν. 450
- Βλ. νῆ τὸν Ποσειδῶ, μαρτύρων γ' ἐναντίον. 451
- Χρ. ἕτερά τε πλείστα τὰς γυναῖκας ἡλόγει· 454
οὐ συκοφαντεῖν, οὐ διώκειν, οὐδὲ τὸν 452
δῆμον καταλύειν, ἄλλα πολλὰ κάγαθά. 453
- Βλ. τί δῆτ' ἔδοξεν;
- Χρ. ἐπιτρέπειν γε τὴν πόλιν 455
ταύταις. ἐδόκει γὰρ τοῦτο μόνον ἐν τῇ πόλει
οὕτω γεγενῆσθαι.
- Βλ. καὶ δέδοκται;
- Χρ. φῆμ' ἐγώ.
- Βλ. ἅπαντ' ἄρ' αὐταῖς ἐστὶ προστεταγμένα,
ἃ τοῖσιν ἀστοῖς ἔμελεν;
- Χρ. οὕτω ταῦτ' ἔχει.
- Βλ. οὐδ' εἰς δικαστήριον ἄρ' εἶμ', ἀλλ' ἡ γυνή; 460
- Χρ. οὐδ' ἔτι σὺ θρέψεις οὓς ἔχεις, ἀλλ' ἡ γυνή.
- Βλ. οὐδὲ στένειν τὸν ὄρθρον ἔτι πρᾶγμ' ἄρά μοι;
- Χρ. μὰ Δί', ἀλλὰ ταῖς γυναιξὶ ταῦτ' ἤδη μέλει·
σὺ δ' ἀστενακτεῖ περδόμενος οἴκοι μενεῖς.
- Βλ. ἐκεῖνο δεινὸν τοῖσιν ἡλίκοισι νῶν, 465
μὴ παραλαβοῦσαι τῆς πόλεως τὰς ἡνίας
ἔπειτ' ἀναγκάζωσι πρὸς βίαν·
- Χρ. τί δρᾶν;

444 βουλεύοντε Fracini: βουλεύονται R: δουλεύοντε ΓΛ.

448 οὐ μαρτύρων Bergk: οὐ μαρτύρων γ' RΛ Suda: γ' οὐ μαρτύρων Γ.

454 transposed by Bachmann to precede 452.

453 ἄλλα Ussher: ἄλλα codd.

455 γε B: σε RΓΛ.

458 ἅπαντ' ἄρ' Cobet: ἅπαντά θ' RΛ: ἅπαντά τ' Γ.

459 ἔμελεν B: ἔμελλεν R: τ' ἔμελλεν ΓΛ.

CHREMES: And he said that a woman was a being full of intelligence, and good at raising income. And he said that *they* don't leak the secrets of the Thesmophoria every time they hold it, whereas you and I, when we're on the Council, are always doing that.

445 BLEPYRUS: And, by Hermes, *that* was no lie he told!

CHREMES: Then he said that they lend each other clothes, jewellery, money, drinking cups, when they're all on their own, not in front of witnesses; and they give it all back and don't cheat the lender; whereas most of us, he said, do do so.

451 BLEPYRUS: Yes, we do, by Poseidon, in *front* of witnesses!

454 CHREMES: And he said many other things in praise of women: they don't become informers, they don't bring prosecutions, they don't subvert the democracy, lots of other good things about them.

453 BLEPYRUS: So what was decided on in the end?

CHREMES: Why, to entrust the City to them; because it was thought that this was the only thing that hadn't ever been done before in Athens.

BLEPYRUS: That's actually been decreed?

CHREMES: Yes, it has.

BLEPYRUS: So all the duties that the male citizens used to be concerned with have now been assigned to the women?

CHREMES: That's right.

460 BLEPYRUS: You mean I won't even be going to court in future, my wife will?

CHREMES: And you won't be maintaining your household any more, your wife will.

BLEPYRUS: So I don't have the bother any more, either, of getting up groaning at first light?

CHREMES: No, indeed, that's the women's concern now; you can stay farting at home, groan-free.

465 BLEPYRUS: There's one thing that folk of our age have to fear: that when the women take over the reins of the City, they may then compel us by force to—

CHREMES: To do what?

- Βλ. κινεῖν ἑαυτάς· ἦν δὲ μὴ δυνώμεθα,
ἄριστον οὐ δώσουσι.
- Χρ. σὺν δέ γε νῆ Δία
δρᾶ ταῦθ', ἵν' ἀριστᾶς τε καὶ κινῆς ἅμα. 470
- Βλ. τὸ πρὸς βίαν δεινότατον.
- Χρ. ἀλλ' εἰ τῇ πόλει
τοῦτο ξυνοίσει, ταῦτα χρὴ πάντ' ἄνδρα δρᾶν.
- Βλ. λόγος γέ τοί τίς ἐστι τῶν γεραιτέρων,
ὅσ' ἂν ἀνόητ' ἢ μῶρα βουλευσώμεθα,
ἅπαντ' ἐπὶ τὸ βέλτιον ἡμῖν ξυμφέρειν. 475
- Χρ. καὶ συμφέροι γ', ὧ πότνια Παλλὰς καὶ θεοί.
ἀλλ' εἴμι· σὺ δ' ὑγίαινε.
- Βλ. καὶ σύ γ', ὧ Χρέμης.
- Χο. ἔμβα, χώρει.
ἄρ' ἐστὶ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τις ἡμῖν ὅστις ἐπακολουθεῖ;
στρέφου, σκόπει, 480
φύλαττε σαυτὴν ἀσφαλῶς, πολλοὶ γὰρ οἱ παινοῦργοι,
μή πού τις ἐκ τοῦπισθεν ὦν τὸ σχῆμα καταφυλάξῃ.
- ἀλλ' ὥς μάλιστα τοῖν ποδοῖν ἐπικτυπῶν βάδιζε· (στρ.
ἡμῖν δ' ἂν αἰσχύνῃν φέροι
πάσαισι παρὰ τοῖς ἀνδράσιν τὸ πρᾶγμα τοῦτ' ἐλεγχθέν. 485
πρὸς ταῦτα συστέλλου σεαυ-
τὴν καὶ περισκοπουμένη
κάκεισε καὶ τὰς δεξιᾶς
«φύλατθ' ὅπως» μὴ ξυμφορὰ γενήσεται τὸ πρᾶγμα.
ἀλλ' ἐγκονῶμεν· τοῦ τόπου γὰρ ἐγγύς ἐσμεν ἤδη,
ὅθενπερ εἰς ἐκκλησίαν ὠρμώμεθ' ἡνίκ' ἤμεν· 490
τὴν δ' οἰκίαν ἔξεσθ' ὁρᾶν, ὅθενπερ ἡ στρατηγὸς
ἐσθ', ἢ τὸ πρᾶγμ' εὐροῦσ' ὃ νῦν ἔδοξε τοῖς πολίταις.

473 γε Suda^G μ1337: τε codd. Suda^r μ1337 Suda γ195.

474 ἀνόητ' ἢ Bentley: ἀνόητα καὶ ΓΛ: ἀνόητα χῆ vel sim. R Suda.

483 ἐπικτυπῶν βάδιζε codd.: βάδιζ' ἐπικτυποῦσα Blaydes.

488 «φύλατθ' ὅπως» Blaydes: om. codd.: «τὰ τῇδε καὶ» (before τὰς δεξιᾶς) Valckenaer:
«τὰ πάντ' ἄθρει» (before κάκεισε) Coulon.

490 ὠρμώμεθ' Biset: ὁρμώμεθ' vel sim. codd.

BLEPYRUS: To screw them; and if we're not able to, they won't give us our lunch.

470 CHREMES: Well then, by Zeus, you should do *this* [*bending forward and raising his long comic phallus to his lips*], to enable you to lunch *and* to screw at the same time!

BLEPYRUS: Terrible thing, though, doing it under compulsion.

CHREMYLUS: Well, if that's going to be for the good of the City, that's what every man ought to do.

475 BLEPYRUS: Well, there certainly is a saying that our forebears had, that all the stupid or foolish decisions we make, all of them turn out to be to our benefit in the end.

CHREMES: And may this one turn out so, Lady Pallas and all you gods! But I'll be going; good health to you.

BLEPYRUS: And to you, Chremes. [*Chremes goes out, right. Blepyrus goes into his house.*]

[*Enter, left, Chorus, cautiously, still in disguise.*]

CHORUS-LEADER:

Step out, march!

Is there any of the men that's following after us?

480 Turn round, look—

[*The Chorus look behind them.*]

guard yourself securely, for there are plenty of villains around, in case there may be someone in our rear watching how we walk.

CHORUS:

So when you walk, make as much noise with your feet as you can: it would put us all to shame

485 in front of the men, if this operation was detected.

So with that in mind, wrap yourself up

tight, look around you

both in that direction and on the right side—

[*They look to left and right in search of a hostile presence.*]

and take care that the operation doesn't end in disaster.

Let's hurry, though; for we're near the place now

490 from which we started when we were going to the Assembly;

and we can see the house that our General is from,

she who devised the plan that the citizen body has now approved.

ὥστ' εἰκὸς ἡμᾶς μὴ βραδύνειν ἔστ' ἐπαναμενούσας (ἀντ.
 πώγωνας ἐξηρτημένας,
 μὴ καὶ τις ἡμᾶς ὄψεται χῆμῶν ἴσως κατείπη. 495
 ἀλλ' εἶα, δεῦρ' ἐπὶ σκιᾷ
 ἐλθοῦσα πρὸς τὸ τεῖχίον,
 παραβλέπουσα θατέρῳ,
 πάλιν μετασκεύαζε σαυτὴν αὐθις ἥπερ ἦσθα,
 καὶ μὴ βράδυν' ὥς τήνδε καὶ δὴ τὴν στρατηγὸν ἡμῶν 500
 χωροῦσαν ἐξ ἐκκλησίας ὀρώμεν. ἀλλ' ἐπείγου
 ἅπανσα καὶ μίσει σάκον πρὸς ταῖν γνάθῳιν ἔχουσα·
 καῦταὶ γὰρ ἄκουσαι πάλαι τὸ σχῆμα τοῦτ' ἔχουσιν.

Πρ. ταυτὶ μὲν ἡμῖν, ὦ γυναῖκες, εὐτυχῶς
 τὰ πράγματ' ἐκβέβηκεν ἀβουλεύσαμεν. 505
 ἀλλ' ὥς τάχιστα, πρὶν τιν' ἀνθρώπων ἰδεῖν,
 ῥίπτεῖτε χλαῖνας, ἐμβὰς ἐκποδῶν ἴτω,
 χάλα συναπτοὺς ἡνίας Λακωνικάς,
 βακτηρίας ἄφεσθε. καὶ μέντοι σὺ μὲν
 ταύτας κατευτρέπιζ'· ἐγὼ δὲ βούλομαι, 510
 εἶσω παρερπύσασα πρὶν τὸν ἄνδρα με
 ἰδεῖν, καταθέσθαι θοῖμάτιον αὐτοῦ πάλιν
 ὅθενπερ ἔλαβον τᾶλλα θ' ἀξηνεγκάμην.

Χο. κείται καὶ δὴ πάνθ' ἅπερ εἶπας· σὸν δ' ἔργον τᾶλλα διδάσκειν,
 ὃ τι σοι δρῶσαι ξύμφορον ἡμεῖς δόξομεν ὀρθῶς ὑπακούειν· 515
 οὐδεμιᾷ γὰρ δεινότερα σοῦ ξυμμείξας· οἶδα γυναικί.

Πρ. περιμείνατέ νυν, ἵνα τῆς ἀρχῆς, ἣν ἄρτι κεχειροτόνημαι,
 ξυμβούλοισιν πάσαις ὑμῖν χρήσωμαι. καὶ γὰρ ἐκεῖ μοι
 ἐν τῷ θορύβῳ καὶ τοῖς δεινοῖς ἀνδρείόταται γεγέννησθε.

495 ἡμᾶς ὄψεται Hermann: ὄψεθ' ἡμᾶς RL: ὄψαιτο ἡμᾶς Γ.

503 καῦταί'αν Leeuwen: χαῦταί codd.

503 ἄκουσαι ... ἔχουσιν Agar: ἤκουσιν ... ἔχουσαι codd.: ἀλγοῦσιν ... ἔχουσαι Palmer.

508 Λακωνικάς codd.: Λακωνικῶν van Leeuwen.

509 ταύτας codd.: ταυτὶ Meineke.

514 καὶ Dobree: om. codd. ·

So it's best that we shouldn't waste time and hang around
 with beards tied on our chins,
 495 in case someone does see us and may possibly tell on us.

Hi there! come over here,
 to the wall, into the shade,
 keeping a look-out from the corner of an eye—
 [All the chorus come as close as possible to the stage-house.]
 and change yourself back again to be the person you were.

[Looking back the way they have come]
 500 And don't be slow about it; for look, here we can see our General
 coming from the Assembly. Hurry up now,
 everyone, and don't stand for having a piece of sacking on your
 cheeks; they themselves have been wearing this get-up under protest
 for some time now!

[As the women tear off and discard their beards, Praxagora re-
 enters, left, alone. She is wearing her own underdress, let down now to
 full length, and carrying her husband's cloak, shoes and stick.]

504-5 PRAXAGORA: Well, ladies, this scheme that we planned has come
 off successfully. Now, as quickly as possible, before anyone sees you, cast
 off cloaks, get shoes out from underfoot, "let loose the knotted-up
 Laconian reins", throw away sticks. And actually [to the chorus-leader]
 510 you get this lot in order; I want to slip through inside before my husband
 sees me and put down the cloak back in the same place I got it from, and
 also the other things I took with me.

[Praxagora goes inside. The chorus busy themselves with
 removing the various items of their disguise, which are left under the
 stage-platform. As they form up again, looking feminine once more,
 Praxagora comes out; she has put on her own cloak and shoes.]

CHORUS-LEADER: Look, everything you mentioned is on the
 515 ground. Now it's your job to give us our further instructions, what you
 think will be the right way for us to obey your orders and do something
 useful; because we're not aware of ever having met a woman more astute
 than you.

PRAXAGORA: Well then, stay around here, so that I can make
 use of you all as my advisers in the office to which I've just been elected;
 because back there, amid the din and the danger, I think you showed
 yourselves full of manly courage.

- Βλ. αὕτη, πόθεν ἦκεις, Πραξαγόρα;
 Πρ. τί δ', ὦ μέλε, 520
 σοὶ τοῦθ';
 Βλ. ὃ τι μοι τοῦτ' ἐστίν; ὡς εὖθηκῶς.
 Πρ. οὗτοι παρά του μοιχοῦ γε φήσεις.
 Βλ. οὐκ ἴσως
 ἐνός γε.
 Πρ. καὶ μὴν βασανίσαι τουτί γέ σοι
 ἔξεστι.
 Βλ. πῶς;
 Πρ. εἰ τῆς κεφαλῆς ὄζω μύρου.
 Βλ. τί δ'; οὐχὶ βινεῖται γυνὴ κἄνευ μύρου; 525
 Πρ. οὐ δῆτα, τάλαν, ἔγωγε.
 Βλ. πῶς οὖν ὄρθριον
 ὥχου σιωπῇ θοϊμάτιον λαβοῦσά μου;
 Πρ. γυνὴ μέ τις νύκτωρ ἐταῖρα καὶ φίλη
 μετεπέμψατ' ὠδίνουσα.
 Βλ. κἄτ' οὐκ ἦν ἐμοὶ
 φράσασαν ἰέναι;
 Πρ. τῆς λεχοῦς δ' οὐ φροντίσαι 530
 οὕτως ἐχούσης, ὦνερ;
 Βλ. εἰποῦσάν γ' ἐμοί.
 ἀλλ' ἔστιν ἐνταῦθά τι κακόν.
 Πρ. μὰ τῷ θεῷ,
 ἀλλ' ὥσπερ εἶχον ὥχόμην· ἐδεῖτο δὲ
 ἥπερ μεθῆκέ μ' ἐξιέναι πάσῃ τέχνῃ.
 Βλ. εἴτ' οὐ τὸ σαυτῆς ἱμάτιον ἐχρῆν σ' ἔχειν; 535
 ἀλλ' ἔμ' ἀποδύσασ', ἐπιβαλοῦσα τοῦγκυκλον,
 ὥχου καταλιποῦς· ὥσπερ εἰ προκείμενον,
 μόνον οὐ στεφανώσας· οὐδ' ἐπιθεῖσα λήκυθον.
 Πρ. ψῦχος γὰρ ἦν, ἐγὼ δὲ λεπτὴ κάσθενής·
 ἔπειθ', ἴν' ἀλεαίνοιμι, τοῦτ' ἡμπεσχόμην· 540
 σὲ δ' ἐν ἀλέᾳ κατακείμενον καὶ στρώμασιν
 κατέλιπον, ὦνερ.

522 παρά του Invernizi: παρά τοῦ codd.

526 δῆτα, τάλαν Reiske: δὴ τάλαιν' codd.

531 γ' ἐμοί R: γέ μοι ΓΛ.

540 ἡμπεσχόμην Bekk. An. 381.25, Lex. Bachm. 73.8: ἡμπισχόμην RL Suda, Zonaras:
 ἡμπισχημένον Γ.

520 [Blepyrus comes out of his house, fully dressed in his own clothes, and accosts Praxagora.]

BLEPYRUS: Here, you, Praxagora, where have you been?

PRAXAGORA: What business is that of yours, my good man?

BLEPYRUS: "What business is that of mine?" How simple can you get?

PRAXAGORA: You're certainly not going to say I came from a lover!

BLEPYRUS: Well, perhaps not from *a* lover!

PRAXAGORA: Well, you're free to put that to the test.

BLEPYRUS: How?

PRAXAGORA: See if my head smells of perfume.

525 BLEPYRUS: What, can't a woman get herself fucked even without perfume?

PRAXAGORA: *I* certainly can't, my dear!

BLEPYRUS: Well, how come you went off at the glimmer of dawn, without a word, and taking my cloak?

PRAXAGORA: A woman who's a close friend of mine sent for me. She'd gone into labour during the night.

530 BLEPYRUS: So couldn't you have told me that before going?

PRAXAGORA: And not had a thought for the mother-to-be, dear, when she was in such a state?

BLEPYRUS: Yes, but *after telling me!* There's something fishy about this.

PRAXAGORA: No, by the Two Goddesses! I just went straight away. The girl who came for me begged me to come out at all costs.

535 BLEPYRUS: Well, shouldn't you have worn your *own* cloak? Instead, you stripped me, threw your mantle over me, and went off leaving me there like a laid-out corpse. I'm surprised you didn't put an oil-jar beside me and a wreath on my head!

540 PRAXAGORA: It was cold, and I'm not strong or well-built; so I put that cloak on to keep warm. And I left you lying warm and well covered, dear.

- Βλ. αἱ δὲ δὴ Λακωνικαὶ
ὥχοντο μετὰ σοῦ κατὰ τί χῆ βακτηρία;
Πρ. ἵνα θοῖμάτιον σώσαιμι, μεθυπεδησάμην,
μιμουμένη σὲ καὶ κτυποῦσα τοῖν ποδοῖν
καὶ τοὺς λίθους παίουσα τῇ βακτηρίᾳ. 545
- Βλ. οἷσθ' οὖν ἀπολωλεκυῖα πυρῶν ἐκτέα,
ὄν χρῆν ἔμ' ἐξ ἐκκλησίας εἰληφέναι;
Πρ. μὴ φροντίσης· ἄρρεν γὰρ ἔτεκε παιδίον.
Βλ. ἡκκλησία;
Πρ. μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἐφ' ἣν ἐγὼ χόμην. 550
ἀτὰρ γεγένηται;
Βλ. ναὶ μὰ Δί'. οὐκ ἤδησθά με
φράσαντά σοι χθές;
Πρ. ἄρτι γ' ἀναμιμνήσκομαι.
Βλ. οὐδ' ἄρα τὰ δόξαντ' οἶσθα;
Πρ. μὰ Δί' ἐγὼ μὲν οὔ.
Βλ. κάθησο τοίνυν σηπίας μασωμένη.
ὑμῖν δέ φασι παραδεδόσθαι τὴν πόλιν. 555
Πρ. τί δρᾶν; ὑφαίνειν;
Βλ. οὐ μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἄρχειν.
Πρ. τίνων;
Βλ. ἀπαξαπántων τῶν κατὰ πόλιν πραγμάτων.
Πρ. νῆ τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, μακαρία γ' ἄρ' ἡ πόλις
ἔσται τὸ λοιπόν.
Βλ. κατὰ τί;
Πρ. πολλῶν οὔνεκα.
οὐ γὰρ ἔτι τοῖς τολμῶσιν αὐτὴν αἰσχυρὰ δρᾶν
< >
ἔσται τὸ λοιπὸν τοῦδαμοῦ δεῖ μαρτυρεῖν,
οὐ συκοφαντεῖν—
Βλ. μηδαμῶς πρὸς τῶν θεῶν
τουτὶ ποιήσης μηδ' ἀφέλλη μου τὸν βίον.
Γε. ὦ δαιμόνι' ἀνδρῶν, τὴν γυναικ' ἕα λέγειν.

551 ἤδησθα Brunck: ἤδειςθα vel sim. codd.

559-560 are omitted by Γ.

560 lacuna posited by Sommerstein.

561 τοῦδαμοῦ δεῖ codd.: οὐδάμ' οὐδὲ or οὐδαμῶς, οὐ Blaydes.

BLEPYRUS: And my Laconians and my walking-stick, why did they go with you?

545 PRAXAGORA: I changed shoes in order not to lose the cloak, and in imitation of you I brought my feet down with a stamp and struck the stones with the stick.

BLEPYRUS: Do you know that you've lost a quarter-bushel of wheat, which I ought to have earned from the Assembly?

PRAXAGORA: Don't worry; it was a boy.

550 BLEPYRUS: What, the Assembly?

PRAXAGORA: No, no, the baby I went to help with. – What, there's been one?

BLEPYRUS: Yes, indeed. Didn't you remember I told you about it yesterday?

PRAXAGORA: Oh, yes, now I recollect you did.

BLEPYRUS: So you don't even know what was decided?

PRAXAGORA: Not me, I don't.

555 BLEPYRUS [*as one who has the most stunning of news*]: Well, sit down, and get some cuttlefish to chew. They say that the City has been handed over to you women.

PRAXAGORA [*affecting bewilderment*]: To do what with? To weave?

BLEPYRUS: No, no, to *rule*.

PRAXAGORA: Rule over who?

BLEPYRUS: Rule over absolutely all the City's affairs!

PRAXAGORA: Then, by Aphrodite, the City will be a happy place from now on!

BLEPYRUS: Why will it?

560 PRAXAGORA: For all sorts of reasons! Those who dare to commit shameful crimes against it will no longer <have any opportunity to do so>; there will be no <going to law> at all in future, no bearing witness, no informing—

BLEPYRUS [*crying out in alarm*]: No, please, in the gods' name, don't do that, don't take away my livelihood!

[*In the middle of this outburst, Blepyrus' neighbour has come out of his house.*]

NEIGHBOUR: My dear fellow, do give your wife a chance to speak!

- Πρ. μὴ λωποδυτῆσαι, μὴ φθονεῖν τοῖς πλησίον, 565
 μὴ γυμνὸν εἶναι, μὴ πένητα μηδένα,
 μὴ λοιδορεῖσθαι, μὴ ἵεχυραζόμενον φέρειν.
 Γε. νῆ· τὸν Προσειδῶ μεγάλα γ', εἰ μὴ ψεύσεται.
 Πρ. ἀλλ' ἀποφανῶ τοῦθ', ὥστε σέ τέ μοι μαρτυρεῖν
 καὶ τοῦτον αὐτὸν μηδὲν ἀντειπεῖν ἐμοί. 570

- Χδ. νῦν δὴ δεῖ σε πυκινὴν φρένα καὶ φιλόσοφον ἐγείρειν
 φροντίδ' ἐπισταμένην
 ταῖσι φίλαισιν ἀμύνειν.
 κοινῇ γὰρ ἐπ' εὐτυχίαισιν
 ἔρχεται γλώττης ἐπίνοια πολίτην
 δῆμον ἐπαγλαίουσα 575
 μυρίαισιν ὠφελίαισι βίου· δη-
 λούν δ' ὅ τι περ δύναται καιρός.
 δεῖται γάρ τι σοφοῦ τινος ἐξευρήματος ἡ πόλις ἡμῶν.
 ἀλλὰ πέρανιε μόνον
 μήτε δεδραμένα μήτ' εἰρημένα πω πρότερον·
 μισοῦσι γάρ, ἦν τὰ παλαιὰ πολλάκις θεῶνται. 580

ἀλλ' οὐ μέλλειν, ἀλλ' ἄπτεσθαι καὶ δὴ χρὴ τῆς διανοίας·
 ὡς τὸ ταχύνειν χαρίτων μετέχει πλεῖστον παρὰ τοῖσι θεαταῖς.

- Πρ. καὶ μὴν ὅτι μὲν χρηστὰ διδάξω πιστεύω· τοὺς δὲ θεατάς,
 εἰ καινοτομεῖν ἐθελήσουσιν καὶ μὴ τοῖς ἡθάσι λίαν
 τοῖς τ' ἀρχαίοις ἐνδιατρίβειν, τοῦτ' ἔσθ' ὃ μάλιστα δέδοικα. 585
 Γε. περὶ μὲν τοίνυν τοῦ καινοτομεῖν μὴ δείσης· τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμῖν
 δρᾶν ἀντ' ἄλλης ἀρετῆς ἐστίν, τῶν δ' ἀρχαίων ἀμελῆσαι.
 Πρ. μὴ νυν πρότερον μηδεὶς ὑμῶν ἀντείπη μηδ' ὑποκρούση,
 πρὶν ἐπίστασθαι τὴν ἐπίνοιαν καὶ τοῦ φράζοντος ἀκοῦσαι.
 κοινωνεῖν γὰρ πάντας φήσω χρῆναι πάντων μετέχοντας 590
 κάκ ταῦτο ζῆν, καὶ μὴ τὸν μὲν πλουτεῖν, τὸν δ' ἄθλιον εἶναι,

- 569 σέ τέ Cobet: σε γέ R: γε ΓΛ.
 570 ἐμοί codd.: ἔτι Cobet: ἔχειν Nauck.
 576 δ' Voss: om. codd.
 576 δύναται codd.: δύνασαι C.Kock.
 577 (γάρ) τι Ald.: τοι ΓΛ: τοῖ γε R.
 581 χρῆ B: χρῆν RΓΛ.
 581 τῆς διανοίας Le Febvre: ταῖς διανοαῖς codd.
 587 ἀρετῆς Bergk: ἀρχῆς codd. Suda.

565 PRAXAGORA: No clothes-snatching, no being jealous of your neighbours, nobody being naked or poor, no slanging matches, no seizures for debt.

NEIGHBOUR: Great stuff, by Poseidon, if she doesn't turn out to be a liar!

570 PRAXAGORA: Why, I'll prove it clearly, so that you'll testify for me that it's true and this one himself [*meaning Blepyrus*] won't say a word in reply to me!

CHORUS:

Now is the time when you must awaken a rich intelligence and a
philosophic

mind that understands

how to help your friends.

For, to the happiness of all alike,

574-5 there is coming from your tongue an idea that will adorn
the people of the City

with countless improvements in their lives;

and it is time to reveal its capabilities.

For our City stands in some need of an ingenious discovery!

Only give them, from beginning to end,

things that have never been done or said before;

580 they hate it if they hear the same old stuff over and over again!

CHORUS-LEADER: You shouldn't waste time, but get started right now on your idea, because pace is what wins the most favour with audiences.

584-5 PRAXAGORA: Well, I'm confident that I'll be giving good advice. But the audience – will they be willing to accept innovation, and not stay too much with the old and the familiar? That's what I'm most afraid of.

NEIGHBOUR: So far as innovation is concerned, have no fear. For us, to innovate, and to despise what's old, takes the place of every other virtue.

590 PRAXAGORA: Then let none of you object or interrupt before you have understood the proposal and listened to the speaker. I am going to propose that everyone should own everything jointly together and live

μηδὲ γεωργεῖν τὸν μὲν πολλήν, τῷ δ' εἶναι μηδὲ ταφῆναι,
μηδ' ἀνδραπόδοις τὸν μὲν χρῆσθαι πολλοῖς, τὸν δ' οὐδ'
ἀκολούθῳ·

ἀλλ' ἓνα ποιῶ κοινὸν πᾶσιν βίον, καὶ τοῦτον ὅμοιον.

Βλ. πῶς οὖν ἔσται κοινὸς ἅπασιν;

Πρ. κατέδει πέλεθον πρότερός μου. 595

Βλ. καὶ τῶν πελέθων κοινωνοῦμεν;

Πρ. μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἔφθης μ' ὑποκρούσας·

τοῦτο γὰρ ἡμελλον ἐγὼ λέξειν. τὴν γῆν πρῶτιστα ποιήσω

κοινὴν πάντων καὶ ἀργύριον καὶ τᾶλλ', ὅπως ἔστιν ἐκάστω·

εἴτ' ἀπὸ τούτων κοινῶν ὄντων ἡμεῖς βοσκήσομεν ὑμᾶς

ταμιεύουσαι καὶ φειδόμεναι καὶ τὴν γνώμην προσέχουσαι. 600

Γε. πῶς οὖν ὅστις μὴ κέκτηται γῆν ἡμῶν, ἀργύριον δὲ

καὶ Δαρεικοὺς, ἀφανῆ πλοῦτον;

Πρ. τοῦτ' εἰς τὸ μέσον καταθήσει.

Βλ. κἂν μὴ καταθεῖς ψευδορκήσῃ; κἀκτήσατο γὰρ διὰ τοῦτο.

Πρ. ἀλλ' οὐδέν τοι χρησίμον ἔσται πάντως αὐτῷ.

Βλ. κατὰ δὴ τί;

Πρ. οὐδεὶς οὐδὲν πενία δράσει· πάντα γὰρ ἔξουσιν ἅπαντες, 605

ἄρτους, τεμάχη, μάζας, χλαίνας, οἶνον, στεφάνους, ἐρεβίνθους·

ὥστε τί κέρδος μὴ καταθεῖναι; σὺ γὰρ ἐξευρὼν ἀπόδειξον.

Βλ. οὐκ οὐν καὶ νῦν οὗτοι μᾶλλον κλέπτουσ', οἷς ταῦτα πάρεστιν;

Γε. πρότερόν γ', ὦταῖρ', ὅτε τοῖσι νόμοις διεχρώμεθα τοῖς

πρότεροισιν·

νῦν δ', ἔσται γὰρ βίος ἐκ κοινοῦ, τί τὸ κέρδος μὴ καταθεῖναι;

Βλ. ἦν μείρακ' ἰδὼν ἐπιθυμήσῃ καὶ βούληται σκαλαθῆραι, 611

ἔξει τούτων ἀφελὼν δοῦναι, τῶν ἐκ κοινοῦ δὲ μεθέξει

ξυγκαταδαρθῶν.

Πρ. ἀλλ' ἐξέσται προῖκ' αὐτῷ ξυγκαταδαρθεῖν·

καὶ ταύτας γὰρ κοινὰς ποιῶ τοῖς ἀνδράσι συγκατακεῖσθαι

καὶ παιδοποιεῖν τῷ βουλομένῳ.

Βλ. πῶς οὖν οὐ πάντες ἴασιν 615

ἐπὶ τὴν ὡραιότητα αὐτῶν καὶ ζητήσουσιν ἐρεῖδιν;

595, 596 πελεθ- Bothe: σπελεθ- codd.

600 ταμιεύουσαι Blaydes: ταμιευόμεναι codd.: [τ]α[] Π60.

603 κἂν ... ψευδορκήσῃ Rogers: καὶ ... ψευδορκῇ[] Π60: καὶ ... ψευδορκήσῃ codd.:
(Βλ.) καὶ μὴ καταθεῖς; (Πρ.) ψευδορκήσῃ. (Βλ.) κἀκτήσατο γὰρ διὰ τοῦτο
Tyrwhitt.

611 βούληται B Suda: βούλει ταῖ R: βούλεται ΓΛ.

613 -δαρθῶν Λ: -δαρθων Π60: -δραθῶν RΓ.

from a common stock, and that we should not have one man being rich and another wretched, nor one farming broad acres while another hasn't enough land to be buried in, nor one man owning many slaves while another doesn't have even one attendant; I'll make it so that there is one shared livelihood for everyone, and it's equal.

595 BLEPYRUS: So how is it going to be made "shared for everyone"?

PRAXAGORA [*angrily*]: You'd want to eat shit ahead of me!

BLEPYRUS: We're going to share all the shit as well?

PRAXAGORA: No, no, you jumped in too soon with your interruption; that was just what I was going to say. In the first place, I shall make land the common property of all, and money, and everything else that every individual possesses; then, from this common stock we
600 women will maintain you, applying our intelligence to manage it economically.

NEIGHBOUR: What about any of us that doesn't own land, but invisible wealth in the form of silver coin and gold darics?

PRAXAGORA: He will deposit it in the central store.

BLEPYRUS: And what if he doesn't deposit it, and takes a false oath that he's kept nothing back? After all, that was how he got it in the first place!

PRAXAGORA: But then, you see, it won't be any use to him at all anyway.

BLEPYRUS: Oh, why not?

605 PRAXAGORA: Nobody will be doing anything under the pressure of poverty, because everyone will have everything – loaves, slices of fish, barley-cakes, warm cloaks, wine, garlands, chickpeas. So what will he gain by not surrendering his money? You find an answer and state it!

BLEPYRUS: Well, even now, aren't those people who have these things bigger thieves than those who don't?

610 NEIGHBOUR: You mean *formerly*, my friend, when we lived under the old laws. *Now*, when we're going to live on a communal basis, what will be his gain by not surrendering?

BLEPYRUS: If he sees a girl and fancies her and wants to poke her about a bit, he'll be able to take some of his money and give it to her, and then have his share of communing – with her, in bed!

615 PRAXAGORA: But he'll be able to sleep with her for free! Women also [*with a gesture towards the Chorus*] I'm making common property, for any man who wishes, to have sex and produce children.

BLEPYRUS: Then surely everyone will go for the most attractive of them and try to shag her!

- Πρ. αἱ φαυλότεραι καὶ σιμότεραι παρὰ τὰς σεμνὰς καθεδοῦνται·
κᾷτ' ἦν ταύτης ἐπιθυμήσῃ, τὴν αἰσχροὴν πρῶθ' ὑποκρούσει.
- Βλ. καὶ πῶς ἡμᾶς τοὺς πρεσβύτας, ἦν ταῖς αἰσχροῖσι συνῶμεν, 619
οὐκ ἐπιλείψει τὸ πέος πρότερον πρὶν ἐκεῖς· οἱ φῆς ἀφικέσθαι;
- Πρ. οὐχὶ μαχοῦνται περὶ σοῦ· θάρρει, μὴ δέισης· οὐχὶ μαχοῦνται.
- Βλ. περὶ τοῦ;
- Πρ. τοῦ μὴ ξυγκαταδαρθεῖν· καὶ σοὶ τοιοῦτον ὑπάρχει.
- Βλ. τὸ μὲν ὑμέτερον γνώμην τιν' ἔχει· προβεβούλευται γὰρ ὅπως ἂν
μηδεμιᾶς ἢ τρύπημα κενόν· τὸ δὲ τῶν ἀνδρῶν τί ποιήσῃ; 625
φεύξονται γὰρ τοὺς αἰσχύιους, ἐπὶ τοὺς δὲ καλοὺς βαδιῶνται.
- Πρ. ἀλλὰ φυλάξουσ' οἱ φαυλότεροι τοὺς καλλίους ἀπιόντας
ἀπὸ τοῦ δείπνου καὶ τηρήσουσ' ἐπὶ τοῖσιν δημοσίοισιν
†οἱ φαυλότεροι†· κοῦκ ἐξέσται παρὰ τοῖσι καλοῖς καταδαρθεῖν
ταῖσι γυναιξίν, πρὶν τοῖς αἰσχροῖς καὶ τοῖς μικροῖς χαρίσωνται.
- Βλ. ἡ Λυσικράτους ἄρα νυνὶ ρὶς ἴσα τοῖσι καλοῖσι φρονήσῃ; 630
- Γε. νῆ τὸν Ἀπόλλω· καὶ δημοτικὴ γ' ἡ γνώμη, καὶ καταχήνη
τῶν σεμνοτέρων ἔσται πολλή καὶ τῶν σφραγίδας ἐχόντων,
ὅταν οὐμβάδ' ἔχων εἴπῃ πρότερος "παραχώρει, κᾷτ' ἐπιτήρει
ὅταν ἤδη γ'ὼ διαπραξάμενος παραδῶ σοι δευτεριάζειν."
- Βλ. πῶς οὖν οὕτω ζώντων ἡμῶν τοὺς αὐτοῦ παῖδας ἕκαστος 635
ἔσται δυνατὸς διαγιγνώσκειν;
- Πρ. τί δὲ δεῖ; πατέρας γὰρ ἅπαντας
τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους αὐτῶν εἶναι τοῖσι χρόνοισιν νομιοῦσιν.
- Βλ. οὐκ οὐκ ἀγχοῦσ' εὖ καὶ χρηστῶς ἐξῆς †τὸν πάντα† γέροντα
διὰ τὴν ἀγνοιαν; ἐπεὶ καὶ νῦν γιγνώσκοντες πατέρ' ὄντα
ἄγχοῦσι· τί δῆθ', ὅταν ἀγνῶς ἦ; πῶς οὐ τότε κάπιχεσθῶνται; 640
- Πρ. ἀλλ' ὁ παρεστὼς οὐκ ἐπιτρέψει· τότε δ' αὐτοῖς οὐκ ἔμελ' οὐδὲν
τῶν ἀλλοτρίων, ὅστις τύπτοι· νῦν δ', ἦν πληγέντος ἀκούσῃ,
- 628 †οἱ φαυλότεροι† RΛ: <τοῖς τ' αὐλείοις> [sic: better would be ταῖς τ' αὐ.] Agar:
<καὶ τοῖς μεγάλοις> (after καλοῖς) Tyrwhitt (<καὶ μεγάλοιςιν> Naber, <τοῖς τ'
εὐπρεπέσιν> Blaydes): Γ omits the line.
- 629 χαρίσωνται Λ: χαρίζονται R: χαρί Γ: χαρίσασθαι Porson.
- 633 οὐμβάδ' ἔχων Agar: ἐμβάδ' ἔχων R: ἐμβάδ' Λ: Γ omits the line.
- 636 πατέρας γὰρ Le Febvre: πατέρας RΓ: πᾶσαν Λ.
- 638 †τὸν πάντα† codd.:]α Π60: πάντ' ἄνδρα van Leeuwen: τότε πάντα Th.Kock.

PRAXAGORA: The plainer women, the ones with the snubbier noses, will sit beside the fine lookers; and then if he fancies *her*, he'll have to give the ugly one a knock first!

620 BLEPYRUS: And what about us old folk? If we have to have sex with the ugly ones, isn't our cock bound to be exhausted before we get – where you said?

PRAXAGORA: Oh, they won't fight for you! Don't worry, have no fear; they won't fight!

BLEPYRUS: Fight over what?

PRAXAGORA: The right *not* to sleep with you. And [*pointing to his phallus*] *yours* is in that state to begin with anyway!

625 BLEPYRUS: Well, from your point of view it makes some sense; you've planned it so that none of you will have an empty hole. But what about the men's point ... of view? What'll happen to them? Because the women will run from the uglier men and go for the handsome ones.

PRAXAGORA: Ah, but the less good-looking men will watch out for the handsomer ones as they leave dinner, and keep an eye on them in the public places < >; and the women won't be allowed to sleep with the handsome men until they've given their favours to the uglies and the shorties.

630 BLEPYRUS: So Lysicrates' nose will hold itself as high as that of any young beau?

NEIGHBOUR: By Apollo, yes; and it's a truly democratic idea, and it'll make absolute fools of those stuck-up folk with signet-rings, when before he can speak a man in cheap shoes says to him "Get out of my way, and then wait for when I've quite finished and I'll hand her over to you to do the second pressing!"

635 BLEPYRUS: Now then, if we live in this kind of way, how will any individual man be able to distinguish who are his own children?

PRAXAGORA: Why should he need to? They will regard *all* older men as their fathers, reckoning by the age difference.

640 BLEPYRUS: Then won't they throttle all the senior citizens good and proper, one after another, because of not knowing who their father is? Because even now, when they know he's their father, they still throttle him; so what'll happen when they *don't* know? They'll positively *shit* on him then, won't they?

PRAXAGORA: No, the bystanders won't let them. Previously they didn't care at all who was assaulting *other* people's fathers. But now,

- μη αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνον τύπτῃ δεδιῶς τοῖς δρώσιν τοῦτο μαχεῖται.
 Βλ. τὰ μὲν ἄλλα λέγεις οὐδὲν σκαιῶς· εἰ δὲ προσελθὼν Ἐπίκουρος
 ἢ Λευκόλοφος πάππαν με καλεῖ, τοῦτ' ἤδη δεινὸν ἀκοῦσαι. 645
 Γε. πολὺ μέντοι δεινότερον τούτου τοῦ πράγματός ἐστι—
 Βλ. τὸ ποῖον;
 Γε. εἴ σε φιλήσειεν Ἀρίστυλλος φάσκων αὐτοῦ πατέρ' εἶναι.
 Βλ. οἰμῶζοι γ' ἂν καὶ κωκύοι.
 Γε. σὺ δέ γ' ὄζοις ἂν καλαμίνθης.
 Πρ. ἄλλ' οὗτος μὲν πρότερον γέγονεν πρὶν τὸ ψήφισμα γενέσθαι,
 ὥστ' οὐχὶ δέος μή σε φιλήσῃ.
 Βλ. δεινὸν μέντ' ἂν ἐπεπόνθη. 650
 τὴν γῆν δὲ τίς ἔσθ' ὁ γεωργήσων;
 Πρ. οἱ δοῦλοι· σοὶ δὲ μελήσει,
 ὅταν ἡ δεκάπουν τὸ στοιχεῖον, λιπαρῶ χωρεῖν ἐπὶ δεῖπνον.
 Βλ. περὶ δ' ἱματίων τίς πόρος ἔσται; καὶ γὰρ τοῦτ' ἐστὶν ἐρέσθαι.
 Πρ. τὰ μὲν ὄνθ' ὑμῖν πρῶτον ὑπάρξει, τὰ δὲ λοιφ' ἡμεῖς ὑφανοῦμεν.
 Βλ. ἔν ἔτι ζητῶ· πῶς, ἣν τις ὄφλη παρὰ τοῖς ἄρχουσι δίκην τῷ; 655
 πόθεν ἐκτεῖσει ταῦτ'; οὐ γὰρ δὴ 'κ τῶν κοινῶν γ' ἐστὶ δίκαιον.
 Πρ. ἄλλ' οὐδὲ δίκαι πρῶτον ἔσσονται.
 Βλ. τουτὶ τοῦπος σ' ἐπιτρίψει.
 Γε. κάγῳ ταύτῃ γνώμην ἐθέμην.
 Πρ. τοῦ γάρ, τάλαν, οὔνεκ' ἔσσονται;
 Βλ. πολλῶν ἔνεκεν, νῆ τὸν Ἀπόλλω· πρῶτον δ' ἐνὸς οὔνεκα δήπου,
 ἣν τις ὀφείλων ἐξαρινῆται.
 Πρ. πόθεν οὖν ἐδάνεισ' ὁ δανείσας, 660
 ἐν τῷ κοινῷ πάντων ὄντων; κλέπτων δήπου 'στ' ἐπίδηλος.
 Γε. νῆ τὴν Δήμητρ', εὖ γε διδάσκεις.
 Βλ. τουτὶ τοῖνον φρασάτω μοι·
 τῆς ἀκείας οἱ τύπτοντες πόθεν ἐκτείσουσιν, ἐπειδὰν

- 643 τύπτῃ (τύπτῃ) ΓΛ: cf. Soph. *Trach.* 663, OT 747:]η Π60: τύπτει R.
 650 ἐπεπόνθη Bentley: ἐπεπόνθη Λ: ἐπεπόνθην RΓ: επειπονηε[Π60.
 652 λιπαρῶ Π60 (conj. Bentley): λιπαρῶς RΓΛ Suda: λιπαρὸν B.
 656 ταῦτ'; οὐ γὰρ δὴ 'κ Jackson: ταύτην; οὐ γὰρ codd.: ταύτην· οὐ γὰρ δὴ 'κ (with
 γε for γ' ἐστὶ) Cobet.
 657 τοῦπος σ' Hansing: τοῦπος R: πόσσ' ΓΛ.
 658 ταύτῃ Toup: ταύτην codd. Suda.

if they hear the cry of someone being beaten, they'll fear that the victim may be *their* old man, and attack the perpetrators.

645 BLEPYRUS: Most of what you say's not at all stupid. But if Epicurus or Leucolophus is going to come up to me and call me Daddy – now *that's* a dreadful thing to hear.

NEIGHBOUR: Well, there could be something a lot more dreadful than that.

BLEPYRUS: What?

NEIGHBOUR: If Aristyllus was to kiss you, claiming that you were his father.

BLEPYRUS: He'd find himself howling and wailing if he did!

NEIGHBOUR: But meanwhile *you'd* be smelling of ...tur(d)meric!

650 PRAXAGORA: But he was born earlier, before the decree was passed, so there's no risk he'll kiss you anyway.

BLEPYRUS: I'd still have been mortified if he had. – But who's there going to be to cultivate the land?

PRAXAGORA: The slaves. Your sole concern will be to go to dinner, sleek and gleaming, when the shadow is ten feet long.

BLEPYRUS: Then about clothes, how will they be provided? That's another question that needs asking.

PRAXAGORA: To begin with you'll have the ones you've got, and then we'll weave you others.

655 BLEPYRUS: There's still one thing I want to know. How about if someone has a lawsuit with someone else before the archons and loses? Where will he get the money to pay what he owes? Surely it's not fair if he gets it from the communal funds.

PRAXAGORA: But there won't *be* any lawsuits in the first place.

BLEPYRUS: Now *that* statement will be your ruin!

NEIGHBOUR: That's how I vote too.

PRAXAGORA: Why, you poor fool, what will they be about?

660 BLEPYRUS: Lots of things, by Apollo; one thing, surely, to begin with, is if someone owes money and denies the debt.

PRAXAGORA: So where did the lender get the money to lend, when everything was in common ownership? He must plainly have stolen it!

NEIGHBOUR: Well explained, by Demeter!

BLEPYRUS: Well, let her explain this to me: people who beat up other people, when they're in riotous mood after a banquet, where will

- εὐωχηθέντες ὑβρίζουσιν; τοῦτο γὰρ οἶμαί σ' ἀπορήσειν.
 Πρ. ἀπὸ τῆς μάξης ἧς σιτεῖται· ταύτης γὰρ ὅταν τις ἀφαιρῇ, 665
 οὐχ ὑβριεῖται φαύλως οὕτως αὐθις τῇ γαστρὶ κολασθεῖς.
 Βλ. οὐδ' αὖ κλέπτῃς οὐδεὶς ἔσται;
 Πρ. πῶς γὰρ κλέψει, μετὸν αὐτῷ;
 Βλ. οὐδ' ἀποδύσουσ' ἄρα τῶν νυκτῶν;
 Γε. οὐκ, ἦν οἴκοι γε καθεύδῃς.
 Πρ. οὐδ' ἦν γε θύραζ', ὥσπερ πρότερον· βίотος γὰρ πᾶσιν ὑπάρξει.
 ἦν δ' ἀποδύῃ γ', αὐτὸς δώσει· τί γὰρ αὐτῷ πρᾶγμα μάχεσθαι; 670
 ἕτερον γὰρ ἰὼν ἐκ τοῦ κοινοῦ κρεῖττον ἐκείνου κομιεῖται.
 Βλ. οὐδέ κυβεύσουσ' ἄρ' ἄνθρωποι;
 Πρ. περὶ τοῦ γὰρ τοῦτο ποιήσῃς;
 Βλ. τὴν δὲ δίαίταν τίνα ποιήσῃς;
 Πρ. κοινὴν πᾶσιν. τὸ γὰρ ἄστυ
 μίαν οἴκησιν φημι ποιήσῃν συρρήξασ' εἰς ἓν ἅπαντα,
 ὥστε βαδίζειν εἰς ἀλλήλων.
 Βλ. τὸ δὲ δεῖπνον ποῦ παραθήσῃς; 675
 Πρ. τὰ δικαστήρια καὶ τὰς στοιὰς ἀνδρῶνας πάντα ποιήσω.
 Βλ. τὸ δὲ βῆμα τί σοι χρησιμον ἔσται;
 Πρ. τοὺς κρατῆρας καταθεῖναι
 καὶ τὰς ὑδρίας· καὶ ῥαψῳδεῖν ἔσται τοῖς παιδαρίοισιν
 τοὺς ἀνδρείους ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ, κεῖ τις δειλὸς γεγένηται,
 ἵνα μὴ δειπνῶσ' αἰσχυρόμενοι.
 Γε. ἡ τὸν Ἀπόλλω, χαριέν γε. 680
 Βλ. τὰ δὲ κληρωτήρια ποῖ τρέψεις;
 Πρ. εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν καταθήσω,
 κᾶτα στήσασα παρ' Ἀρμοδίῳ κληρώσω πάντας, ἕως ἂν
 εἰδῶς ὁ λαχὼν ἀπὶ χαίρων ἐν ὁποίῳ γράμματι δειπνεῖ·
 καὶ κηρύξει τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ βῆτ' ἐπὶ τὴν ὁτοίαν ἀκολουθεῖν 684
 τὴν βασιλείον δειπνήσοντας, τὸ δὲ θῆτ' εἰς τὴν παρὰ ταύτην,
 τοὺς δ' ἐκ τοῦ κάππ' εἰς τὴν στοιὰν ἐλθεῖν τὴν ἀλφιτόπωλιν. *

665 ταύτης R: ταύτην ΓΛ.

667 κλέψει Brunck: κλέψαι codd. Suda.

675 εἰς ἀλλήλων Dindorf: εἰς ἀλλήλους R: ὡς ἀλλήλους ΓΛ.

677 καταθεῖναι van Herwerden: καταθήσω codd. Suda.

they get money to pay the damages for their assault? I fancy you'll be baffled by that one!

665 PRAXAGORA: He'll pay out of the barley-cake that forms his food ration. When he's deprived of part of that, he won't commit outrages so lightly in future, after being punished via the stomach!

BLEPYRUS: And won't there be any thieves, either?

PRAXAGORA: How can anyone steal anything, when he's already part-owner of it?

BLEPYRUS: So they also won't strip off people's clothes at night?

NEIGHBOUR: Not if you sleep at home!

670 PRAXAGORA: Not even if you go out, like you used to; because everyone will have the means of living anyway. And if someone does try to strip someone, he'll surrender the cloak voluntarily. What good will it do him to fight for it? He can go and get another one from the communal stores, better than the first.

BLEPYRUS: So people won't, either, gamble at dice?

PRAXAGORA: No, because what will they use for stakes?

BLEPYRUS: And what kind of lifestyle are you going to create?

675 PRAXAGORA: A life of universal communality. I declare that I mean to convert the whole town into one residence, breaking through all the walls of the buildings and merging them into one, so that everyone can walk into everyone else's house.

BLEPYRUS: And where will you serve dinner?

PRAXAGORA I'll make all the lawcourts and colonnades into dining-rooms.

BLEPYRUS: And what use will you have for the speaker's platform?

680 PRAXAGORA: To put the mixing-bowls and water-jars down on. And the young boys will be able to recite poetry in honour of those who have been brave in war, and also about anyone who's shown himself a coward, so they'll be so ashamed they'll stay away from dinner.

NEIGHBOUR: Nice idea, by Apollo!

BLEPYRUS: And what will you do with the allotment machines?

685 PRAXAGORA: I'll put them in the Agora, and then stand them by the statue of Harmodius and put everyone into the lottery, until they're drawn and know what letter they'll be dining under and go away delighted; and the herald will proclaim that those under Beta should follow her to the Basileios Colonnade to dine, the Thetas to the one next to it, and that those under Eta should go to the Cornmarket Colonnade.

Βλ. ἵνα κάπτωσιν;

Πρ. μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἵν' ἐκεῖ δειπνῶσιν.

Βλ. ὅτῳ δὲ τὸ γράμμα

μὴ ῥεγκυσθῇ καθ' ὃ δειπνήσει, τούτους ἀπελῶσιν ἅπαντες;

Πρ. ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔσται τοῦτο παρ' ἡμῖν.

πᾶσι γὰρ ἄφθονα πάντα παρέξομεν, 690

ὥστε μεθυσθεῖς αὐτῷ στεφάνῳ

πᾶς τις ἅπεισιν τὴν δᾶδα λαβών.

αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες κατὰ τὰς διόδους

προσπίπτουσαι τοῖς ἀπὸ δείπνου

τάδε λέξουσιν· "δεῦρο παρ' ἡμᾶς·

ἐνθάδε μεῖράξ ἔσθ' ὦραία." 695

"παρ' ἐμοὶ δ' ἐτέρα",

φήσει τις ἄνωθ' ἐξ ὑπερώου,

"καὶ καλλίστη καὶ λευκοτάτη·

πρότερον μέντοι δεῖ σε καθεύδειν 700

αὐτῆς παρ' ἐμοί."

τοῖς εὐπρεπέσιν δ' ἀκολουθοῦντες

καὶ μειρακίοις οἱ φαυλότεροι

τοιάδ' ἐροῦσιν· "ποῖ θεῖς, οὔτος;

πάντως οὐδὲν δράσεις ἐλθών·

τοῖς γὰρ σιμοῖς καὶ τοῖς αἰσχροῖς 705

ἐψηφίσται προτέροις βινεῖν,

ὑμᾶς δὲ τέως θρῖα λαβόντας

διφόρου συκῆς

ἐν τοῖς προθύροιςι δέφεσθαι."

φέρε νυν φράσον μοι, ταῦτ' ἀρέσκει σφῶν;

Βλ. καὶ Γε. πάνν. 710

Πρ. βαδιστέον τᾶρ' ἐστὶν εἰς ἀγορὰν ἐμοί,

ἵν' ἀποδέχωμαι τὰ προσιόντα χρήματα,

λαβοῦσα κηρύκαιναν εὐφωνόν τινα.

ἐμέ γὰρ ἀνάγκη ταῦτα δρᾶν ἡρημένην

ἄρχειν, καταστήσαί τε τὰ ξυσσίτια, 715

ὅπως ἂν εὖωχῆσθε πρῶτον τήμερον.

Βλ. ἤδη γὰρ εὖωχισόμεσθα;

688 ἅπαντες codd. Suda: ἅπαντας Ald.

701 εὐπρεπέσιν δ' Bentley: δ' εὐπρεπέσιν codd.

710 φράσον codd.: φράσατον Reisig.

BLEPYRUS: To eta up the corn?

PRAXAGORA: Of course not! To dine there.

BLEPYRUS: And anyone who doesn't get his letter drawn to give him a dinner, everybody will force them to leave?

690 PRAXAGORA: No, that won't happen with us. We're going to provide everything in abundance for all, so that everyone will go away drunk, garland on head and torch in hand. And in the alleyways the
695 women will waylay the men coming from dinner and say this to them: "Come here to our place; there's a lovely girl in here". "And I've got another," will say a woman from an upstairs flat above, "really beautiful
700 *and* really white-skinned! *But* you'll have to sleep with me before her." Meanwhile the less good-looking men will be following close behind the young and handsome ones, and saying something like this: "Where are you off to so fast, you? You won't achieve anything, anyway, if you do
705 go in. It's been decreed that the snub-nosed and the ugly are to fuck first, while you lot stay outside the door, take hold of the leaves of your double-fruited fig-tree, and *wank!*" – Come on then, tell me, do you two
710 approve of all this?

BLEPYRUS *and* NEIGHBOUR: Very much!

PRAXAGORA: Then look, I've got to go to the Agora, to receive the incoming goods, after getting myself a heraldess with a strong voice.
714–5 Having been elected to office, it's essential for me to do this and to set up the communal dining arrangements, so that you can have your first feast today.

BLEPYRUS: We're going to feast, so soon?

- Πρ. φήμ' ἐγώ.
ἔπειτα τὰς πόρνas καταπαῦσαι βούλομαι
ἀπαξαπάσας.
- Βλ. ἵνα τί;
Γε. δῆλον τουτογί·
ἵνα τῶν νέων ἔχωσιν αὐται τὰς ἀκμάς. 720
καὶ τὰς γε δούλας οὐχὶ δεῖ κοσμουμένας *
τὴν τῶν ἐλευθέρων ὑφαρπάζειν Κύπριν,
ἀλλὰ παρὰ τοῖς δούλοισι κοιμᾶσθαι μόνον,
κατωνάκην τὸν χοῖρον ἀποτετιλμένας.
- Βλ. φέρε νυν ἐγώ σοι παρακολουθῶ πλησίον, 725
ἵν' ἀποβλέπωμαι καὶ ταδί λέγωσί με·
"τὸν τῆς στρατηγοῦ τοῦτον οὐ θαυμάζετε;"
- Γε. ἐγώ δ', ἵν' εἰς ἀγοράν γε τὰ σκεύη φέρω,
προχειριοῦμαι κάξετάσω τὴν οὐσίαν.

ΧΟΡΟΥ

- Γε. χώρει σὺ δεῦρο, κιναχύρα, καλὴ καλῶς 730
τῶν χρημάτων θύραζε πρώτη τῶν ἐμῶν,
ὅπως ἂν ἐντετριμμένη κανηφορῆς,
πολλοὺς κάτω δὴ θυλάκους στρέψας' ἐμούς.
ποῦ 'σθ' ἡ διφροφόρος; ἡ χύτρα, δεῦρ' ἔξιθι.
νὴ Δία, μέλαινά γ' τοῦδ' ἂν εἴτ' τὸ φάρμακον 735
ἔψουσ' ἔτυχες, ᾧ Λυσικράτης μελαίνεται.
ἴστω παρ' αὐτήν. δεῦρ' ἴθ', ἡ κομμώτρια.
φέρε δεῦρο ταύτην τὴν ὑδρίαν, ὑδριαφόρε.
ἐνταῦθα. σὺ δὲ δεῦρ', ἡ κιθαρωδός, ἔξιθι,
πολλάκις ἀναστήσασά μ' εἰς ἐκκλησίαν 740
ἄωρὶ νύκτωρ διὰ τὸν ὄρθριον νόμον.
ὁ τὴν σκάφην λαβὼν προίτω· τὰ κηρία
κόμιζε· τοὺς θαλλοὺς καθίστη πλησίον,
καὶ τῷ τρίποδ' ἐξένεγκε καὶ τὴν λήκυθον.

719 τουτογί Bentley: τουτοτί RL: τοῦτο τί Γ.

724 κατωνάκην Tygwhitt: κατωνάκη or τη codd. Suda.

726 ταδί λέγωσί με Blaydes: λέγωσί με ταδί Λ: λέγωσί μοι ταδί RG.

after 729 χοροῦ R: om. ΓΛ.

735 τοῦδ' ἂν εἴτ' RG Suda: οὐδ' ἂν εἰς Λ: οἶ' ἂν εἰ Meineke: ὥς ἂν εἰ Halbertsma:
perh. e.g. {οὐδ' ἂν} εἰ «σύ· μῶν» (... μελαίνεται;).

PRAXAGORA: That's what I'm saying. Then I want to put all the prostitutes out of business.

BLEPYRUS: Why?

720 NEIGHBOUR: That's pretty obvious: so that these ones here [*indicating the Chorus*] can have the p(r)ick of the young men.

PRAXAGORA: And, what's more, slave-girls aren't to doll themselves up and rob the free women of their love-rights; they are to sleep only with slaves, and have their pussies plucked in the shaggy smock style.

725 BLEPYRUS [*as Praxagora turns to leave for the Agora*]: Right then, let me follow close behind you, so that eyes will turn to me and people will say this of me: "Don't you admire the General's husband there?" [*He goes out, left, following Praxagora.*]

NEIGHBOUR: And I'm going to prepare and inspect my property, ready to take my stuff in to the Agora. [*He goes into his house.*]

[*The Chorus sing a short song, whose words have not survived.*]

[*The Neighbour comes out of his house carrying a flour-sieve; subsequently, as indicated below, other utensils are brought out at his instructions by his two slaves, Sicon and Parmenon (each of whom, immediately he has handed over an item or items, goes back in to fetch more), and arranged in line as if to form a procession.*]

730 NEIGHBOUR: Come prettily out here, my pretty bran-sifter, first of my worldly goods, so that you can serve as basket-bearer like the well-powdered girl you are, after having emptied so many of my meal-bags! [*Calling into the house*] Where's the stool-bearer? Cooking-pot, come
735 out here! [*Sicon brings out a pot; his master inspects it.*] By Zeus, you're black – as black as if it was you that boiled the dye that Lysicrates blackens his hair with! Stand beside her. [*He places the pot next to the sieve, and calls into the house again.*] Come here, maid-in-waiting. [*Parmenon brings out a ladle and a water-jar; his master takes the ladle and places it next to the pot.*] Jar-bearer, bring that jar here [*taking the jar from Parmenon*]. There [*setting it down*]. [*Calling*] You come out
740 here, musician! [*Sicon brings out a hand-mill.*] How often you've roused me in the dark, at an unearthly hour, to go to the Assembly, with your song of dawning! [*The two slaves respond alternately to the following orders, with whose rapid succession they have some difficulty keeping up.*] Come forward, the man with the tray. – Bring the honeycombs. [*The honeycombs, when brought, are put on the tray, which is placed between the ladle and the jar.*] – Set the olive-branches next to them, and bring out the two tripods [*three-legged tables*] and the

τὰ χυτρίδι' ἤδη καὶ τὸν ὄχλον ἀφίετε.

745

ΑΝΗΡ

ἐγὼ καταθήσω τὰμά; κακοδαίμων ἄρα
ἀνὴρ ἔσομαι καὶ νοῦν ὀλίγον κεκτημένος.
μὰ τὸν Ποσειδῶ οὐδέποτε γ', ἀλλὰ βασανιῶ
πρώτιστον αὐτὰ πολλάκις καὶ σκέψομαι.
οὐ γὰρ τὸν ἐμὸν ἰδρῶτα καὶ φειδωλίαν
οὐδέν πρὸς ἔπος οὕτως ἀνοήτως ἐκβαλῶ,
πρὶν ἐκπύθωμαι πᾶν τὸ πρᾶγμ' ὅπως ἔχει.
οὗτος, τί τὰ σκευάρια ταυτὶ βούλεται;
πότερον μετοιικιζόμενος ἐξενήνοχας
αὐτ', ἢ φέρεις ἐνέχυρα θήσων;

750

Γε. οὐδαμῶς.

755

Αν. τί δῆτ' ἐπὶ στοίχου 'στὶν οὕτως; οὐ τι μὴν
Ἰέρωνι τῷ κήρυκι πομπὴν πέμπετε;

Γε. μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἀποφέρειν αὐτὰ μέλλω τῇ πόλει
εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν κατὰ τοὺς δεδογμένους νόμους.

Αν. μέλλεις ἀποφέρειν;

Γε. πάνυ γε.

Αν. κακοδαίμων ἄρ' εἶ,
νὴ τὸν Δία τὸν σωτήρα.

760

Γε. πῶς;

Αν. πῶς; ῥαδίως.—

Γε. τί δ'; οὐχὶ πειθαρχεῖν με τοῖς νόμοις δεῖ;

Αν. ποίοισιν, ὦ δύστηνε;

Γε. τοῖς δεδογμένοις.

Αν. δεδογμένοισιν; ὥς ἀνόητος ἦσθ' ἄρα.

Γε. ἀνόητος;

Αν. οὐ γάρ; ἡλιθιώτατος μὲν οὖν
ἀπαξαπάντων.

765

Γε. ὅτι τὸ ταπτόμενον ποιῶ;

Αν. τὸ ταπτόμενον γὰρ δεῖ ποιεῖν τὸν σῶφρονα;

Γε. μάλιστα πάντων.

Αν. τὸν μὲν οὖν ἀβέλτερον.

748 οὐδέποτε γ' Porson: γ' οὐδέποτ' codd.

756 οὐ τι μὴν Ussher: cf. Pl. Laws 906e: οὐ τι μὴ codd., Priscian 18.258: οὐ τί που Dobree.

758 ἀλλ' ἀποφέρειν B: ἀλλὰ φέρειν RΓΛ.

762 με RΛ: om. Γ: γε B.

oil-flask. [*To both slaves, as they go inside together*] Now you can let
 745 the crowd of little pots start moving.

* [*While Sicon and Parmenon are bringing out further items, and they and their master are arranging them at the rear of the "procession", another man (hereafter referred to as the Dissident) enters, right. He is talking to himself, and does not at first notice the others.*]

DISSIDENT: Me surrender my goods? Then I'll really be an
 absolute loser and have very little sense. Never, by Poseidon, not till I've
 750 first tested and examined the matter many times. I'm not going to chuck
 away, so stupidly and pointlessly, the fruits of my sweat and my thrift,
 until I've thoroughly ascertained the lie of the whole situation. [*Seeing
 the Neighbour, his slaves and his goods*] Hey, you, what's the meaning
 755 of all this gear? Have you brought it out because you're moving house, or
 are you taking it to pawn?

NEIGHBOUR: Certainly not.

DISSIDENT [*half to himself*]: Why is it all in single file like this?
 [*To the Neighbour*] You're not, are you, preparing a display for Hieron
 the auctioneer?

NEIGHBOUR: Not at all; I'm about to take them to the Agora to
 give to the state, as required under the laws that have been passed.

DISSIDENT [*incredulously*]: You mean to take them in?
 760

NEIGHBOUR: Just so.

DISSIDENT: Then you *are* a loser, by Zeus the Saviour!

NEIGHBOUR: Why?

DISSIDENT: Why? That's easy to see—

NEIGHBOUR: What, oughtn't I to obey the laws?

DISSIDENT: What laws, you wretched fool?

NEIGHBOUR: The laws that have been passed.

DISSIDENT: Been passed? How stupid you seem to be!

NEIGHBOUR: Stupid?
 765

DISSIDENT: Aren't you? Or rather, the biggest imbecile in the
 whole world!

NEIGHBOUR: Because I do what I'm instructed to do?

DISSIDENT: What, you think a sound-headed man ought to do
 what he's told?

NEIGHBOUR: Absolutely.

DISSIDENT: You mean a *moron* should!

- Γε. σὺ δ' οὐ καταθεῖναι διανοεῖ;
 Αν. φυλάξομαι,
 πρὶν ἄν γ' ἴδω τὸ πλῆθος ὃ τι βουλεύεται. 770
- Γε. τί γὰρ ἄλλο γ' ἢ φέρειν παρσκευασμένοι
 τὰ χρήματ' εἰσίν;
 Αν. ἀλλ' ἰδὼν ἐπειθόμην.
 Γε. λέγουσι γοῦν ἐν ταῖς ὁδοῖς.
 Αν. λέξουσι γάρ.
 Γε. καὶ φασιν οἷσιν ἀράμενοι.
 Αν. φήσουσι γάρ.
 Γε. ἀπολείς ἀπιστῶν πάντ'.
 Αν. ἀπιστήσουσι γάρ. 775
- Γε. ὁ Ζεὺς σέ γ' ἐπιτρίψειεν.
 Αν. ἐπιτρίψουσι γάρ.
 οἷσιν δοκεῖς τιν' ὅστις αὐτῶν νοῦν εχει;
 οὐ γὰρ πάτριον τοῦτ' ἐστίν.
 Γε. ἀλλὰ λαμβάνειν
 ἡμᾶς μόνον δεῖ;
 Αν. νῆ Δία· καὶ γὰρ οἱ θεοί.
 γνώσει δ' ἀπὸ τῶν χειρῶν γε τῶν ἀγαλμάτων· 780
 ὅταν γὰρ εὐχώμεσθα διδόναι τὰγαθὰ,
 ἔστηκεν ἐκτείνοντα τὴν χεῖρ' ὑπτίαν,
 οὐχ ὥς τι δώσουτ' ἀλλ' ὅπως τι λήψεται.
 Γε. ὦ δαιμόνι' ἀνδρῶν, ἔα με τῶν προὔργου τι δρᾶν.
 ταυτὶ γὰρ ἐστι συνδετέα. ποῦ μοῦσθ' ἱμάς; 785
- Αν. ὄντως γὰρ οἴσεις;
 Γε. ναὶ μὰ Δία· καὶ δὴ μὲν οὖν
 τωδὶ ξυνάπτω τῷ τρίποδε.
 Αν. τῆς μωρίας·
 τὸ μηδὲ περιμείναντα τοὺς ἄλλους ὃ τι
 δράσουσιν, εἶτα τηνικαῦτ' ἤδη·
- Γε. τί δρᾶν;
 Αν. ἐπαναμένειν, ἔπειτα διατρίβειν ἔτι. 790
- Γε. ἵνα δὴ τί;
 Αν. σεισμὸς εἰ γένοιτο πολλάκις,
 ἢ πῦρ ἀπότροπον, ἢ διάξειεν γαλῇ,
 παύσαιντ' ἄν εἰσφέροντες, ὦμβρόντητε σύ.
- 773 λέξουσι Ald.: λέγουσι codd.
 780 γε Reiske: τε codd.

NEIGHBOUR: And you mean not to surrender yours?

770 DISSIDENT: I'll wait and watch until such time as I see how most people are deciding.

NEIGHBOUR: Why, they're ready to take in their property, of course.

DISSIDENT: I'll believe that when I see it.

NEIGHBOUR: Well, they are talking about it in the streets—

DISSIDENT [*mockingly*]: Oh, yes, they'll talk!

NEIGHBOUR: —and saying they're going to take their stuff and deliver it in.

DISSIDENT: Oh, yes, they'll say so!

775 NEIGHBOUR: You'll be the death of me, being sceptical about everything like this!

DISSIDENT: Oh, yes, they'll be sceptical!

NEIGHBOUR: Oh, Zeus blast you!

DISSIDENT: Oh, yes, they'll blast! Do you think any of them that's got any sense will hand it in? That's not our tradition.

NEIGHBOUR: You mean we must only take and not give?

780 DISSIDENT: Yes, by Zeus. That's what the gods do. You can tell by the hands of their statues. When we pray to them to give us blessings, they stand holding out their hands palm upwards, not in the way of someone who's going to give, but looking to *get* something.

785 NEIGHBOUR: My good man, let me get on with what I've got to do. These things have to be tied up. Where can I find a strap?

[*One of the slaves points to a leather strap which he has brought out earlier, and the Neighbour begins to tie the tables together with it, while the slaves begin to pack the other goods into sacks.*]

DISSIDENT: You're really going to take them in?

NEIGHBOUR: Yes, indeed – or rather, I *am* tying together these two tables at this moment!

DISSIDENT: What stupidity! Not even to wait and see what other people are going to do, and *then* at *that* stage—

NEIGHBOUR: To do what?

790 DISSIDENT: To hang on, and then to hang on a bit longer.

NEIGHBOUR: For what purpose?

DISSIDENT: Oh, if by any chance there was an earthquake, or a bolt of lightning, or if a ferret ran across the street, they'd stop bringing their stuff in, you moonstruck idiot.

Γε. χαρίεντα γοῦν πάθοιμ' ἄν, εἰ μὴ 'χοιμ' ὅποι
ταῦτα καταθείην.

Αν. μὴ γὰρ οὐ λάβῃς ὅποι; 795
θάρρει, καταθήσεις, κἄν ἔνης ἔλθῃς.

Γε. τιή;

Αν. ἐγῶδα τούτους χειροτονοῦντας μὲν ταχύ,
ἄττ' ἂν δὲ δόξῃ, ταῦτα πάλιν ἀρνούμενους.

Γε. οἴσουσιν, ὦ τᾶν.

Αν. ἦν δὲ μὴ κομίσωσι, τί;

Γε. ἀμέλει, κομιούσιν.

Αν. ἦν δὲ μὴ κομίσωσι, τί; 800

Γε. μαχοῦμεθ' αὐτοῖς.

Αν. ἦν δὲ κρείττους ὦσι, τί;

Γε. ἄπειμ' ἐάσας.

Αν. ἦν δὲ πωλῶσ' αὐτά, τί;

Γε. διαρραγείης.

Αν. ἦν διαρραγῶ δέ, τί;

Γε. καλῶς ποιήσεις.

Αν. σὺ δ' ἐπιθυμεῖς εἰσφέρειν;

Γε. ἔγωγε· καὶ γὰρ τοὺς ἐμαυτοῦ γείτονας 805
ὀρῶ φέροντας.

Αν. πάνυ γ' ἂν οἶν Ἀντισθένης
αὐτ' εἰσενέγκοι· πολὺ γὰρ ἐμμελέστερον
πρότερον χέσαι πλεῖν ἢ τριάκονθ' ἡμέρας.

Γε. οἴμωζε.

Αν. Καλλίμαχος δ' ὁ χοροδιδάσκαλος
αὐτοῖσιν εἰσοίσει τι;

Γε. πλείω Καλλίου.

* 810

Αν. ἄνθρωπος οὗτος ἀποβαλεῖ τὴν οὐσίαν.

Γε. δεινόν γε λέγεις.

Αν. τί δεινόν; ὥσπερ οὐχ ὁρῶν
ἀεὶ τοιαῦτα γιγνόμενα ψηφίσματα.

οὐκ οἶσθ' ἐκεῖν' οὕδοξε, τὸ περὶ τῶν ἀλῶν;

Γε. ἔγωγε.

794 μὴ 'χοιμ' (μῆχοιμ') Λ: μῆχοιμ' R: μῆχ' οἴμ' Γ.

795 καταθείην Brunck: καταθείμην codd.

795 λάβῃς Heindorf: λάβοις codd.

804 ἐπιθυμεῖς εἰσφέρειν Agar: ἐπιθυμήσεις φέρειν codd.

812 δεινόν Reisig: δεινά codd.

795 NEIGHBOUR: Nice thing it would be for me, if I came and found
no space left to deposit this stuff.

DISSIDENT: Afraid you won't find space for it, is that it? Don't worry, you'll be able to deposit it, even if you come the day after tomorrow.

NEIGHBOUR: How do you make that out?

DISSIDENT: I know these people. They vote in haste, and then turn round and renege on what they've decided.

NEIGHBOUR: They'll bring theirs in, man.

DISSIDENT: And what if they don't?

800 NEIGHBOUR: Don't worry, they will.

DISSIDENT [*doggedly*]: And what if they don't?

NEIGHBOUR: We'll fight them.

DISSIDENT: And what if they're too strong for you?

NEIGHBOUR: I'll go away and leave them be.

DISSIDENT: And what if they sell your stuff?

NEIGHBOUR: Oh, blast you to pieces!

DISSIDENT [*in the same tone as before*]: And what if I do blast to pieces?

NEIGHBOUR: I'll be very much obliged!

DISSIDENT: And you really want to take your stuff in?

805 NEIGHBOUR: Yes, I do. I see that my neighbours are taking theirs.

DISSIDENT [*with heavy sarcasm*]: Oh, I'm sure Antisthenes will take in his, for one! He'd find it much more agreeable to shit for a month or more, sooner than do that!

NEIGHBOUR: Oh, to hell with you!

810 DISSIDENT [*unruffled*]: And Callimachus, the chorus-trainer, is he going to bring anything in to them?

NEIGHBOUR: More than Callias!

DISSIDENT: This man wants to throw away his property!

NEIGHBOUR: That's an absurd thing to say.

DISSIDENT: What's absurd about it? As if you couldn't see that decrees like this get made all the time. Don't you remember that one that got passed, the one about salt?

815 NEIGHBOUR: I do.

- Αν. τοὺς χαλκοῦς δ' ἐκείνους ἤνικα 815
 ἐψηφισάμεθ', οὐκ οἶσθα;
 Γε. καὶ κακὸν γέ μοι
 τὸ κόμμ' ἐγένετ' ἐκείνο. πωλῶν γὰρ βότρυς
 μεστήν ἀπήρα τὴν γνάθον χαλκῶν ἔχων,
 κᾶπειτ' ἐχώρουν εἰς ἀγορὰν ἐπ' ἄλφιστα·
 ἔπειθ', ὑπέχοντος ἄρτι μου τὸν θύλακον, 820
 ἀνέκραγ' ὁ κῆρυξ· "μὴ δέχεσθαι μηδένα
 χαλκὸν τὸ λοιπόν· ἀργύρῳ γὰρ χρώμεθα."
 Αν. τὸ δ' ἔναγχος οὐχ ἅπαντες ἡμεῖς ὤμνυμεν
 τάλαντ' ἔσεσθαι πεντακόσια τῇ πόλει
 τῆς τετταρακοστῆς, ἣν ἐπόρισ' Εὐριπίδης;
 825
 κεῦθὺς κατεχρύσου πᾶς ἀνὴρ Εὐριπίδην.
 ὅτε δὴ δ' ἀνασκοπούμενοις ἐφαίνετο
 ὁ Διὸς Κόρινθος καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμ' οὐκ ἤρκεσεν,
 πάλιν κατεπίττου πᾶς ἀνὴρ Εὐριπίδην.
 Γε. οὐ ταῦτόν, ὦ τάν. τότε μὲν ἡμεῖς ἤρχομεν, 830
 νῦν δ' αἱ γυναῖκες.
 Αν. ἄς γ' ἐγὼ φυλάξομαι,
 νῆ τὸν Ἰοσειδῶ, μὴ κατουρήσωσί μου.
 Γε. οὐκ οἶδ' ὅ τι ληρεῖς. φέρε σὺ τάνάφορον, ὁ παῖς.
 ΚΗΡΥΚΑΙΝΑ
 ὦ πάντες ἄστοί, νῦν γὰρ οὕτω ταῦτ' ἔχει,
 835
 χωρεῖτ', ἐπείγεσθ' εὐθὺ τῆς στρατηγίδος,
 ὅπως ἂν ὑμῖν ἡ τύχη κληρουμένοις
 φράσῃ καθ' ἕκαστον ἄνδρ' ὅποι δειπνήσετε·
 ὥς αἱ τράπεζαί γ' εἰσὶν ἐπινενημέναι
 ἀγαθῶν ἀπάντων καὶ παρεσκευασμένοι,
 840
 κλῖναί τε σισυρῶν καὶ δαπίδων νενασμένοι.
 κρατῆρας ἐγκιρνᾶσιν, αἱ μυροπῶλιδες
 822 χαλκὸν Pollux 9.93: χαλκοῦν codd. Suda.
 825 τετταρα- Brunck: τεσσαρα- ΓΛ: τεσσαρα- R.
 825, 829 Εὐριπίδ- Bergk: Εὐριπίδ- codd.
 826 κεῦθὺς Küster: καὺθὺς codd.
 831 ἄς γ' ΓΛ: ἄς R.
 832 κατουρήσωσί B: κατουρήσουσί RΓΛ.
 836 ὑμῖν Biset: ἡμῖν codd.
 837 ὅποι RΓΛ: ὅπου B.
 838 ἐπινενημέναι Dindorf, cf. Phrynichus PS 21.6: ἐπινενασμένοι codd. Suda.
 841 κρατῆρας ἐγκ- Dawes: κρατῆρα (κρατῖνα ΓΛ) συγκ- codd.

DISSIDENT: And when we voted for that copper coinage, don't you remember that?

NEIGHBOUR: Yes, and that coinage did me a bad turn. I'd been selling grapes, and I started out with a full cargo of coppers in my mouth, and then made for the Agora to buy barley meal; then, just as I was holding my bag open for it to be poured in, the herald cried out "No one to accept copper any longer! Our currency is silver!"

DISSIDENT: And just recently, didn't we all swear that the City was going to get five hundred talents from the two-and-a-half-per-cent tax that Heurippides had devised – and straight away everyone was covering Heurippides with gold? Then, when they examined it closely and it turned out to be the same old story and the thing failed to yield enough, everyone turned round and started covering Heurippides with pitch!

NEIGHBOUR: It's not the same thing, man. At that time we were in charge; now it's the women.

DISSIDENT: The women? I'm going to watch out, by Poseidon, in case they piss over me!

NEIGHBOUR: I don't know what you're blethering about. [*To one of his slaves, who have now completed packing and securing his goods*]: Take up the pole, boy.

[*Before the slave can obey, a Heraldess enters, left, and makes the following proclamation.*]

HERALDESS: All you citizens! – because that's the way it is now. Go, hurry, straight to where the Lady General is, so that you can be entered in the lottery in which Fortune will tell you, man by man, where you can go to dine. Because the tables are prepared and heaped high with all kinds of good things, and the couches are piled with blankets and rugs. They're mixing the wine-bowls, the women perfume-sellers are standing

ἐστᾶσ' ἐφεξῆς, τὰ τεμάχη ῥιπίζεται,
 λαγῶ' ἀναπηγνύασι, πόπανα πέττεται,
 στέφανοι πλέκονται, φρύγεται τραγήματα,
 χύτρας ἔτνους ἔψουσιν αἱ νεώταται. 845

Σμοῖος δ' ἐν αὐταῖς ἵππικὴν στολὴν ἔχων
 τὰ τῶν γυναικῶν διακαθαίρει τρύβλια.
 Γέρων δὲ χωρεῖ χλανίδα καὶ κονίποδας
 ἔχων, καχάζων μεθ' ἑτέρου νεανίου.
 ἐμβὰς δὲ κεῖται καὶ τρίβων ἐρριμμένος. 850

πρὸς ταῦτα χωρεῖθ', ὥς ὁ τὴν μᾶζαν φέρων
 ἔστηκεν· ἀλλὰ τὰς γνάθους διοίγετε.

Αν. οὐκουν βαδιοῦμαι δῆτα; τί γὰρ ἔστηκ' ἔχων
 ἐνταῦθ', ἐπειδὴ ταῦτα τῇ πόλει δοκεῖ;

Γε. καὶ ποῖ βαδιεῖ σὺ μὴ καταθεῖς τὴν οὐσίαν; 855

Αν. ἐπὶ δεῖπνον.

Γε. οὐ δῆτ', ἦν γ' ἐκείναις νοῦς ἐνῆ,
 πρὶν ἂν γ' ἀπενέγκης.

Αν. ἄλλ' ἀποίσω.

Γε. πηνικά;

Αν. οὐ τοῦμόν, ὦ τᾶν, ἐμποδῶν ἔσται.

Γε. τί δαί;

Αν. ἑτέρους ἀποίσειν φήμ' ἔθ' ὑστέρους ἐμοῦ.

Γε. βαδιεῖ δὲ δειπνήσων ὅμως;

Αν. τί γὰρ πάθω; 860

τὰ δυνατὰ γὰρ δεῖ τῇ πόλει ξυλλαμβάνειν
 τοὺς εὔφρονούντας.

Γε. ἦν δὲ κωλύσωσι, τί;

Αν. ὁμόσ' εἴμι κύψας.

Γε. ἦν δὲ μαστιγῶσι, τί;

Αν. καλούμεθ' αὐτάς.

Γε. ἦν δὲ καταγελῶσι, τί;

Αν. ἐπὶ ταῖς θύραις ἐστὼς—

Γε. τί δράσεις; εἰπέ μοι. 865

Αν. τῶν εἰσφερόντων ἀρπάσομαι τὰ σιτία.

848 Γέρων codd.: Γέρης Dindorf: perh. Ἰέρων.

848 κονίποδας Brunck: κονίποδα codd. ⁷⁹Suda (γράφεται δὲ καὶ κ.): κονίποδε
 Dindorf.

852 διοίγετε ⁷⁹Σ^R: διοίγνυτε R^{ac}ΓΛ: διοίγνυτε R^{pc}.

857 πρὶν ἂν γ' Porson: πρὶν γ' RΓΛ: πρὶν γ' ἂν B.

858 δαί Blaydes: δῆ codd.

in a row, the slices of fish are being fanned on the fire, they're putting hare on the spit, cakelets are being baked, garlands plaited, sweetmeats
 845 roasted; the juniors are boiling pots of pea-soup, and Smoeus is among them, wearing a cavalry outfit, licking the women's bowls clean. Then Geron is striding out in light sandals and fine cloak, laughing heartily with
 850 another young man; rough shoe and old coat lie discarded. So come, because the boy with the barley-cake is standing ready: get your jaws open! [*The Heraldess goes out, right.*]

DISSIDENT: Well, I'm going to go then, aren't I? If that's what the City has decided, what's the point of my standing around here?

855 NEIGHBOUR: And *where* are you intending to go, if you haven't surrendered your property?

DISSIDENT: To dinner.

NEIGHBOUR: Not till you've brought your stuff in, not if those women have any sense.

DISSIDENT: Oh, I'll bring it in.

NEIGHBOUR: When?

DISSIDENT: It won't be *my* delay that holds them up, man.

NEIGHBOUR: Then what will it be?

DISSIDENT: I tell you there will be others who bring theirs in even later than me.

860 NEIGHBOUR: And you're going to go for dinner anyway?

DISSIDENT: What else am I supposed to do? It's the duty of all loyal citizens to aid the community to the best of their ability.

NEIGHBOUR: And what if they stop you?

DISSIDENT: I'll lower my head and charge them.

NEIGHBOUR: And what if they flog you?

DISSIDENT: We'll summon them to court.

NEIGHBOUR: And what if they laugh at that?

865 DISSIDENT: I'll stand by the door and—

NEIGHBOUR: And do what, tell me?

DISSIDENT: And snatch the food from the people bringing it in.

- Γε. βάδιζε τοίνυν ὕστερος· σὺ δ', ὦ Σίκων
καὶ Παρμένων, αἵρεσθε τὴν παμπησίαν.
Αν. φέρε νυν ἐγὼ σοι ξυμφέρω.
Γε. μή, μηδαμῶς.
δέδοικα γὰρ μὴ καὶ παρὰ τῇ στρατηγίδι, 870
ὅταν κατατιθῶ, προσποιῇ τῶν χρημάτων.
Αν. νῆ τὸν Δία δεῖ γοῦν μηχανήματός τινος,
ὅπως τὰ μὲν ὄντα χρήμαθ' ἔξω, τοῖσδέ τε
τῶν ματτομένων κοινῇ μεθέξω πως ἐγώ.
ὀρθῶς, ἔμοιγε φαίνεται· βαδιστέον 875
ὁμός' ἐστὶ δειπνήσοντα κοῦ μελλητέον.

ΧΟΡΟΥ

ΓΡΑΥΣ Α

- τί ποθ' ἄνδρες οὐχ ἤκουσιν; ὥρα δ' ἦν πάλαι·
ἐγὼ δὲ καταπεπλασμένη ψιμυθίῳ
ἔσθηκα καὶ κροκωτὸν ἡμφιεσμένη
ἀργός, μινυρομένη τι πρὸς ἑμαυτὴν μέλος, 880
παιζουσ' ὅπως ἂν περιλάβοιμ' αὐτῶν τινα
παριόντα. Μοῦσαι, δεῦρ' ἴτ' ἐπὶ τοῦμόν στομά,
μελῦδριον εὐροῦσαί τι τῶν Ἴωνικῶν.

ΚΟΡΗ

- νῦν μὲν με παρακύψασα προὔφθης, ὦ σαπρά.
ῥου δ' ἐρήμας, οὐ παρούσης ἐνθάδε 885
ἐμοῦ, τρυγήσειν καὶ προσάξεσθαί τινα
ἄδουσ'· ἐγὼ δ', ἦν τοῦτο δρᾶς, ἀντάσομαι.
κεῖ γὰρ δι' ὄχλου τοῦτ' ἐστὶ τοῖς θεωμένοις,
ὅμως ἔχει τερπνόν τι καὶ κωμωδικόν.
Γρ.^α τούτῳ διαλέγου κάποχώρησον· σὺ δέ, 890
φιλοττάριον αὐλητά, τοὺς αὐλοὺς λαβὼν
ἄξιον ἐμοῦ καὶ σοῦ προσαύλησον μέλος.

εἴ τις ἀγαθὸν βούλεται πα-
θεῖν τι, παρ' ἐμοι χρὴ καθεύδειν·

873 τοῖσδέ τε Elmsley; τοῖσδέ γε codd.: τοισδεδι Bergk.
after 876 χοροῦ R: om. ΓΛ.

877 ἤκουσιν Brunck: ἤξουσι(ν) codd.

887 δρᾶς, ἀντάσομαι Portus: δράσαντ' ἄσομαι codd.

NEIGHBOUR: Then you can come *after* me. [*To his slaves*] You, Sicon, and you, Parmenon, take up my worldly goods.

DISSIDENT [*coming up to the slaves*]: Here, let me help you carry them.

870 NEIGHBOUR [*forcing him away*]: No, no way! I'm afraid in case when I've deposited them, you may claim before the Lady General that my goods are yours. [*He goes out, left, followed by the slaves carrying his effects.*]

DISSIDENT: I certainly need some scheme, by Zeus, to let me, on the one hand, keep the property I've got, and also somehow share with these people in the communal meal that's being prepared. [*After a*
875 *moment's thought*] That's got it right, as far as I can see. I must get into the thick of things on the dinner front, without delay. [*He goes out, left.*]

[*The Chorus sing a song, whose words have not survived.*]

[*An old woman appears at the central door. She is heavily made-up and wears a yellow dress quite unsuited to her age. She peers hopefully off, left, towards the Agora.*]

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Why haven't the men come? They were due long ago. And I'm standing here, plastered with white-lead and wearing a saffron dress, doing nothing, just warbling a little tune to
880 myself, disporting myself in the hope that I might snare one of them as he passes by. [*Praying*] Muses, come here to sit on my lips, and find me a nice little melody in the Ionian style.

[*Before she can begin to sing, a teenage girl appears at the upstairs window, right.*]

GIRL: Just for now you got in first, you rotting hulk, and poked
884-5 your head out before me! You thought that I wasn't here, and that you could strip an unwatched vineyard and lure someone to you with a song. Well, if you do that, I'll sing in competition with you. Because even if the audience find that tiresome, it still has something pleasing and comedy-like about it.

890 FIRST OLD WOMAN [*bending over and presenting her posterior to the Girl*]: Talk to *that*, and be off with you! [*To the piper who has been accompanying the Chorus*] And you, piper sweetie, take your pipes and play a tune to show your quality – and mine.

[*Singing with pipe accompaniment*]

If anyone wants to have a good time, he should sleep with *me*!

οὐ γὰρ ἐν νέαις τὸ σοφὸν ἔν- 895
 εστιν, ἀλλ' ἐν ταῖς πεπείροις.
 οὐδέ τοι στέργειν ἂν ἐθέλοι μᾶλλον ἢ ἰγὼ
 τὸν φίλον ᾧπερ ξυνείην,
 ἀλλ' ἐφ' ἕτερον ἂν πέτοίτο—

Κο. μὴ φθόνει ταῖσιν νέαισι· 900
 τὸ τρυφερὸν γὰρ ἐμπέφυκε
 τοῖς ἀπαλοῖσι μηροῖς
 καπὶ τοῖς μήλοις ἐπάν-
 θεῖ· σὺ δ', ὦ γραῦ, παραλέλεξαι κἀντέτριψαι
 τῷ Θανάτῳ μέλημα. 905

Γρ.^α ἐκπέσοι σου τὸ τρῆμα
 τό τ' ἐπὶ κλιντρον ἀποβάλοις
 βουλομένη σποδεῖσθαι,
 καπὶ τῆς κλίνης ὄφιν προσελκύσαι
 βουλομένη φιλησαι. 910

Κο. αἰαῖ, τί ποτε πείσομαι;
 οὐχ ἦκει μοῦταῖρος·
 μόνη δ' αὐτοῦ λείπομ'· ἡ
 γὰρ μοι μήτηρ ἄλλη—
 καὶ τᾶλλα μ' οὐδὲν τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα δεῖ λέγειν.
 ἀλλ', ὦ μαῖ', ἵκετεύομαι, 915
 κάλει τὸν Ὅρθαγόραν,
 ὅπως ἂν σαυτῆς κατόναι',
 ἀντιβολῶ σε.

Γρ.^α ἦδη τὸν ἀπ' Ἰωνίας
 τρόπον, τάλαινα, κησιᾶς·
 δοκεῖς δέ μοι καὶ λάβδα κατὰ τοὺς Λεσβίους. 920

896 πεπείροις vel sim. A Suda: πεπείραις R: ἐμπείροις Γ.
 897 τοι ... ἂν RΓΛ Suda^f: τι ... ἂν Suda^g: τις ... ἂν B: perh. τᾶν ... τις.
 898 ᾧπερ codd.: περ. ᾧ (giving an aristophanean, cf. comm. on 893-910).
 907 ἀποβάλοις codd. Suda: ἀποβάλλου Zonaras: ἀποβάλιοι Bothe.
 909 ὄφιν προσελκύσαι Wilamowitz: ὄφιν εὖροις καὶ προσελκύσαι (σαι Γ) codd.
 912 μοῦταῖρος Reiske: μ' οὐτ' αἶρος R: μου τοῦρος ΓΛ.
 913 ἄλλη Jackson: ἄλλη βέβηκε(ν) codd.
 914 τᾶλλα μ' οὐδὲν τὰ μετὰ Dobree: τᾶλλ' οὐδὲν μετὰ RΓ: τᾶλλ' οὐδὲν με Λ.
 917 ἂν σαυτῆς Wilamowitz: σαυτῆς codd.: σαυτῆς ἂν Hermann.
 920 καὶ codd.: κᾶν Blaydes.
 920 λάβδα Λ: λάμβδα R: λαύδα Γ.

895 For expertise is not to be found
 in the young, but in the mature.
 And I tell you she couldn't be more ready than I am
 to cherish my boyfriend;
 no, she'd fly off to another—

900 GIRL [*interrupting*]:
 Don't be jealous of the young;
 for voluptuousness has its natural abode
 in tender thighs
 and blooms on firm breasts;
 while *you*, old woman, are plucked and plastered
 905 to be the darling of Death!

FIRST OLD WOMAN:
 May your hole fall out
 and may you lose your lie-upon
 when you want a shag,
 and may you, on your bed, draw a snake to your arms
 910 when you want a kiss!

GIRL: "Ah me, what will become of me?
 My boyfriend hasn't come,
 and I'm left alone here,
 because my mother's somewhere else—"
 [*speaking*] and I've no need to add what comes after that!

915 [*Singing again*]
 "Oh, nurse, I implore you—"
 [*maliciously, to the Old Woman*]
 invite the Hard Man round,
 so that you can give yourself some pleasure,
 [*passionately again*]
 "I beg of you!"

FIRST OLD WOMAN:
 Already, poor soul, you've got the itch
 in the Ionian fashion,
 920 [*speaking*] and it looks to me like you've got the big L as in Lesbos
 too!

Κο. ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν ποθ' ὑφαρπάσαι-
ο τὰμὰ παίγνια· τὴν δ'
ἐμὴν ὥραν οὐκ ἀπολείς
οὐδ' ἀπολήψει.

Γρ.^α ἄδ' ὅποσα βούλει καὶ παράκυφθ' ὥσπερ γαλῆ·
οὐδεὶς γὰρ ὥς σὲ πρότερον εἴσεις' ἀντ' ἐμοῦ.

925

Κο. οὐκουν ἐπ' ἐκφοράν γε· καινόν γ', ὦ σαπρά.
Γρ.^α οὐ δῆτα.

Κο. τί γὰρ ἂν γραῖ καινόν τις λέγοι;

Γρ.^α οὐ τοῦμόν ὁδυνήσει σε γῆρας.

Κο. ἀλλὰ τί;

ἡγχουσα μάλλον καὶ τὸ σὸν ψιμύθιον;

Γρ.^α τί μοι διαλέγει;

Κο. σὺ δὲ τί διακύπτεις;

Γρ.^α ἐγώ;

930

ἄδω πρὸς ἐμαυτὴν Ἐπιγένει τῷμῳ φίλῳ.

Κο. σοὶ γὰρ φίλος τίς ἐστὶν ἄλλος ἢ Γέρης;

Γρ.^α δείξει γε καὶ σοί· τάχα γὰρ εἴσιν ὥς ἐμέ.

ὁδὶ γὰρ αὐτός ἐστιν.

Κο. οὐ σοῦ γ', ὦλεθρε,

δεόμενος οὐδέν.

Γρ.^α νῆ Δί', ὦ φθίνυλλα σύ.

935

Κο. δείξει τάχ' αὐτός· ὥς ἔγωγ' ἀπέρχομαι.

Γρ.^α κᾶγωγ', ἵνα γνῶς ὥς πολὺ σοῦ μείζον φρονῶ.

ΕΠΙΓΕΝΗΣ

εἴθ' ἐξῆν παρὰ τῇ νέᾳ καθεύδειν

καὶ μὴ ἴδει πρότερον διασποδῆσαι

ἀνάσιμον ἢ πρεσβυτέραν·

940

οὐ γὰρ ἀνασχετὸν τοῦτό γ' ἐλευθέρῳ.

Γρ.^α οἰμῶζων ἄρα νῆ Δία σποδῆσεις·

921-2 ὑφαρπάσαιο codd.: ὑφαρπάσαις Scaliger: perh. ὑφαρπάσαις σὺ.

927 καινόν Blaydes: καινά codd.

933 δείξει Ald.: δόξει RF: δόξη Λ.

939 μὴ ἴδει Elmsley: μὴδέν codd. Suda.

940 πρεσβυτέραν Bothe: πρεσβύτερον codd. Suda.

GIRL: But you'll never rob me
of my playmates, and
my youth you will not destroy
nor grab a share of!

925 FIRST OLD WOMAN: Sing as much as you like, and peep out
there like a ferret if you want! Nobody's going to go into your place
before mine!

GIRL: Not to take me to the grave, anyway! [*Laughing at her
own joke*] Hey, that's a new one, you rotting hulk!

FIRST OLD WOMAN: No, it isn't.

GIRL [*mockingly correcting herself*]: No, what *could* anyone say
that would be new to an old crone like you?

FIRST OLD WOMAN: It's not my *age* that's going to be a pain to
you!

GIRL: Then what is? Are your rouge and your white-lead going to
hurt me more?

930 FIRST OLD WOMAN: Why do you keep talking to me?

GIRL: And why do *you* keep peeping out like that?

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Me? I'm singing to myself a song to my
boyfriend Epigenes.

GIRL: *You've* got a boyfriend – apart from Geres, that is?

FIRST OLD WOMAN [*looking off, left*]: He'll show you. He's
going to come to me in a moment. Because here he is himself.

935 GIRL: But not wanting anything from *you*, you old ruin!

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Oh, yes, he does, Miss Anorexia.

GIRL: Well, he'll soon show us himself; because I'm going. [*She
withdraws from the window.*]

FIRST OLD WOMAN: And so am I, so that you can see how
much more confident I am than you. [*She goes inside.*]

[*The young man Epigenes enters, left, wearing a garland and
carrying a torch.*]

EPIGENES [*singing*]:

940 If only I was allowed to sleep with the young one
and didn't first have to screw
an old woman or one with a turned-up nose!
That's intolerable for a free man.

FIRST OLD WOMAN [*reappearing at the door*]:
You'll howl if you do screw her, by Zeus!

οὐ γὰρ τὰπὶ Χαριξένης τάδ' ἐστίν.
κατὰ τὸν νόμον ταῦτα ποιεῖν
ἐστι δίκαιον, εἰ δημοκρατούμεθα.

945

ἄλλ' εἴμι τηρήσουσ' ὅ τι καὶ δράσει ποτέ.
Επ. εἴθ', ὦ θεοί, λάβοιμι τὴν καλὴν μόνην,
ἐφ' ἣν πεπωκὼς ἔρχομαι πάλαι ποθῶν.
Κο. ἐξηπάτηκα τὸ κατάρατον γράδιον·
φρουδὴ γάρ ἐστιν οἰομένη μ' ἔνδον μενεῖν.
ἄλλ' οὔτοσὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς οὐ μεμνήμεθα.

950

δεῦρο δὴ, δεῦρο δὴ,
φίλον ἐμόν, δεῦρό μοι
πρόσελθε καὶ ξύνευνέ μοι
τὴν εὐφρόνην ὅπως ἔσει.
πάνυ γάρ <δεινός> τις ἔρως με δονεῖ
τῶνδε τῶν σῶν βοστρύχων·
ἄτοπος δ' ἔγκειταί μοι τις πόθος,
ὅς με διακναίσας ἔχει.
μέθες, ἰκνούμαί σ', Ἔρως,
καὶ ποιήσων τόνδ' ἐς εὐνήν
τὴν ἐμὴν ἰκέσθαι.

(στρ.

955

Επ. δεῦρο δὴ, δεῦρο δὴ,
φίλον ἐμόν, καὶ σύ μοι
καταδραμοῦσα τὴν θύραν
τὴνδ' ἄνοιξον· εἰ δὲ μή,
καταπεσὼν κείσομαι.
ἄλλ' ἐν ἴτῳ σῶ βούλομαι† κόλπῳ
πληκτίζεσθαι μετὰ σῆς πυγῆς.
Κύπρι, τί μ' ἐκμαίνεις ἐπὶ ταύτῃ;
μέθες, ἰκνούμαί σ', Ἔρως,

(ἀντ.

960

965

946 δράσει Brunck: δράσοι Γ: δράσεις RL.
949 ἐξηπάτηκα Blaydes: ἐξηπάτησα codd.
953 ξύνευνέ μοι Bergk: ξύνευνός μοι codd.: ξύνευνος Bothe.
954 <δεινός> τις ἔρως Dindorf: τις ἔρως codd. Suda: τις ἔρως <δαινός> Coulon.
960 φίλον ἐμόν Wilamowitz: om. codd. (but cf. on 963).
961-2 τὴνδ' ἄνοιξον Newiger: ἄνοιξον τὴνδ' codd.: ἄνοιξον Blaydes.
963 ἄλλ' Wilamowitz: φίλον ἄλλ' codd.
963 ἴτῳ σῶ βούλομαι† codd.: σῶ βούλομαι! ἐγὼ Wilamowitz: perh. e.g. τῷ σῷ χρήζω.
964 σῆς Bentley: τῆς σῆς codd.

It's not the days of Charixene now.

944-5 It's right and proper for these things to be done
according to the law, if we live in a democracy.

[*Aside*] Right, I'll go, and keep watch on what he finally does. [*She withdraws again.*]

EPIGENES [*now in front of the Girl's house*]: Ye gods, if only I could have just the pretty one! I've yearned for her so long, and now, with a few inside, I've come for her!

950 GIRL [*reappearing at her window and looking down*]: Good, I've conned that old hag, curse her! She's gone, thinking I was going to stay inside. [*Seeing Epigenes*] Ah, here's the very man we were talking about.

[*Singing to Epigenes*]

955 Come hither, O come hither,
my love, come hither
to me, and be sure to be
my bedfellow through the night:
I am awl with fierce passion
for those locks of yours!
An extraordinary longing assails me,
it has me racked to pieces!
Release me, Eros, I beseech you,
and make him come
to my bed!

EPIGENES:

960 Come hither, O come hither,
you too, my love, I pray,
run down and open
this door: if you do not,
I'll fall to the ground and lie here!
Ah, I want to lie in your bosom
and exchange bonks with your bum!
965 Ah, Cypris, why are you making me mad for her?
Release me, Eros, I beseech you,

καὶ ποίησον τήνδ' ἐς εὐνὴν
τὴν ἐμὴν ἱκέσθαι.

καὶ ταῦτα μέντοι μετρίως (στρ.

πρὸς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάγκην

εἰρημέν' ἐστίν. σὺ δέ μοι,

φίλτατον, ὦ ἱκετεύω,

970

ἄνοιξον, ἀσπάζου με·

διὰ τοι σὲ πόνους ἔχω.

ὦ χρυσοδαίδαλτον ἐμὸν

(ἀντ.

μέλημα, Κύπριδος ἔρνος,

μέλιττα Μούσης, Χαρίτων

θρέμμα, Τρυφῆς πρόσωπον,

ἄνοιξον, ἀσπάζου με·

διὰ τοι σὲ πόνους ἔχω.

975

Γρ.^α οὔτος, τί κόπτεις; μῶν ἐμέ ζητεῖς;

Επ. πόθεν;

Γρ.^α καὶ τὴν θύραν γ' ἤραττες.

Επ. ἀποθάνοιμ' ἄρα.

Γρ.^α τοῦ δαὶ δεόμενος δᾶδ' ἔχων ἐλήλυθας;

Επ. Ἀναφλύστιον ζητῶν τιν' ἀνθρωπον.

Γρ.^α τίνα;

Επ. οὐ τὸν Σεβίνον, ὃν σὺ προσδοκᾷς ἴσως.

980

Γρ.^α νὴ τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, ἣν τε βούλη γ' ἦν τε μή.

Επ. ἄλλ' οὐχὶ νυνὶ τὰς ὑπερεξηκοντέτεις

εἰσάγομεν, ἄλλ' εἰσαῦθις ἀναβεβλήμεθα·

τὰς ἐντὸς εἴκοσιν γὰρ ἐκδικάζομεν.

Γρ.^α ἐπὶ τῆς πρότερον ἀρχῆς γε ταῦτ' ἦν, ὦ γλύκων·

985

νυνὶ δὲ πρῶτον εἰσάγειν ἡμᾶς δοκεῖ.

Επ. τῷ βουλομένῳ γε, κατὰ τὸν ἐν πεττοῖς νόμον.

Γρ.^α ἄλλ' οὐδ' ἐδείπνεις κατὰ τὸν ἐν πεττοῖς νόμον.

969 μέντοι R: μέν μοι ΓΛ.

971 με B: τε RΓΛ.

980 Σεβίνον Bentley: σὲ βινουῖνθ' R: σὲ βινουῶνθ' Λ: σὲ κινουῖνθ' Γ.

985 πρότερον Γ: προτέρας RΛ.

987 πεττοῖς B: πετοῖς Γ: Παιτοῖς RΛ ἸΣ^{RA}.

988 οὐδ' ἐδείπνεις Bentley: οὐδὲ δειπνεῖς RΛ (ΓB omit this line).

988 πεττοῖς Brunck: Παιτοῖς RΛ.

and make her come
to my bed!

*

And all of that, compared

*

with my state of distress,

970

has been putting it mildly. But now,

my beloved, oh, I implore you,

open and welcome me:

it's for you, I tell you, that I suffer so.

You golden work of art,

my darling, scion of Cypris,

honeybee of the Muses, nursling

of the Graces, the very image of Delight,

open and welcome me;

975

it's for you, I tell you, that I suffer so.

[He knocks hard on the Girl's door; but it is the Old Woman who comes out of her door and accosts him.]

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Here, you, why are you knocking? Not looking for me, are you?

EPIGENES: No way!

FIRST OLD WOMAN: And you really bashed on my door, too!

EPIGENES: Strike me dead if I did!

FIRST OLD WOMAN [*pointing to his erect phallus*]: Well, what were you after, coming here with a ... torch?

EPIGENES: I was looking for a man from Wanksbury.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Who?

980

EPIGENES: Well, not Shagathon, which is who you seem to be expecting.

FIRST OLD WOMAN [*grabbing hold of him*]: Yes, it is, by Aphrodite – whether you like it or whether you don't!

EPIGENES [*trying to free himself*]: But we're not entering cases over sixty for trial at present; we've postponed them to a later date. We're finishing dealing with those under twenty first.

985

FIRST OLD WOMAN: That was under the *previous* regime, sweetie. Now the ruling is that you must enter *us* first.

EPIGENES: "At the player's option", as the rules of backgammon say.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: But you didn't follow the rules of backgammon when it was a question of having dinner!

- Επ. οὐκ οἶδ' ὅ τι λέγεις· τηνδεδί μοι κρουστέον.
 Γρ.^α ὅταν γε κρούσης τὴν ἐμὴν πρῶτον θύραν. 990
 Επ. ἀλλ' οὐχὶ νυνὶ κρησέραν αἰτούμεθα.
 Γρ.^α οἶδ' ὅτι φιλοῦμαι· νῦν δὲ θαυμάζεις ὅτι
 θύρασί μ' ἤϊρες. ἀλλὰ πρόσαγε τὸ στόμα.
 Επ. ἀλλ', ὦ μέλ', ὀρωδῶ τὸν ἐραστὴν σου.
 Γρ.^α τίνα;
 Επ. τὸν τῶν γραφῶν ἄριστον.
 Γρ.^α οὗτος δ' ἐστὶ τίς; 995
 Επ. ὃς τοῖς νεκροῖσι ζωγραφεῖ τὰς ληκύθους.
 ἀλλ' ἄπιθ', ὅπως μὴ σ' ἐπὶ θύραισιν ὄψεται.
 Γρ.^α οἶδ' οἶδ' ὅ τι βούλει.
 Επ. καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ σέ, νῆ Δία.
 Γρ.^α μὰ τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, ἥ μ' ἔλαχε κληρουμένη,
 μὴ γῶ σ' ἀφήσω.
 Επ. παραφρονεῖς, ὦ γράδιον. 1000
 Γρ.^α ληρεῖς· ἐγὼ δ' ἄξω σ' ἐπὶ τὰμὰ στρώματα.
 Επ. τί δῆτα κρεάγρας τοῖς κάδοις ὠνοίμεθ' ἄν,
 ἐξὸν καθέντα γράδιον τοιουτονὶ
 ἐκ τῶν φρεάτων τοὺς κάδους ξυλλαμβάνειν;
 Γρ.^α μὴ σκῶπτέ μ', ὦ τάλαν, ἀλλ' ἔπου δεῦρ' ὡς ἐμέ. 1005
 Επ. ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀνάγκη μοῦστίν, εἰ μὴ τῶν ἐμῶν
 τὴν πεντακοσιοστὴν κατέθηκας τῇ πόλει.
 Γρ.^α νῆ τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, δεῖ γε μέντοι σ' ὡς ἐγὼ
 τοῖς τηλικούτοις ξυγκαθεύδουσ' ἥδομαι.
 Επ. ἐγὼ δὲ ταῖς γε τηλικαύταις ἄχθομαι, 1010
 κοῦκ ἄν πιθοίμην οὐδέποτ'.
 Γρ.^α ἀλλὰ νῆ Δία
 ἀναγκάσει τουτί σε.
 Επ. τοῦτο δ' ἐστὶ τί;
 Γρ.^α ψήφισμα, καθ' ὃ σε δεῖ βαδίζειν ὡς ἐμέ.
 Επ. λέγ' αὐτὸ τί ποτε κᾶστι.

992 φιλοῦμαι codd.: φιλεῖς με van Leeuwen.

998 ἐγὼ σέ (ἐγὼ σε) codd.: ἔγωγε ^{1Σ^{RTA}}.

1002 ὠνοίμεθ' ἄν vel sim. RΓ Suda κ2360: cf. *Birds* 1152: ὠνήμεθ' ἄν Λ· ὠνούμεθ' ἄν
 Suda ε1800: ὠνούμεθα Cobet.

1008 σ' Reisig: om. codd.

EPIGENES [*trying to turn back to the Girl's door*]: I don't know what you're talking about. I've got to knock on this door.

990 FIRST OLD WOMAN: Only when you've *knocked* my door first!

EPIGENES: We're not wanting to borrow a flour-sieve just now.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: I know that I'm loved; only at present you're taken aback because you found me out of doors. Come on [*offering to kiss him*], put your lips here.

EPIGENES: But, dear lady, I'm worried about your boyfriend.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Who's he?

995 EPIGENES: The best painter alive.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: And which one's that?

EPIGENES: The one who paints jars for funerals. Go now, in case he sees you outside the door.

FIRST OLD WOMAN [*with affected coyness*]: I know what you're after, I know!

EPIGENES: And I know what *you're* after, by Zeus!

1000 FIRST OLD WOMAN [*gripping him firmly, despite his continuing struggles*]: By Aphrodite, to whose allotted realm I belong, I will not let you go!

EPIGENES: Old woman, you're out of your mind!

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Nonsense! I'm going to take you under my covers.

EPIGENES [*still resisting; turning to the audience*]: Why should we buy hooks any more to haul up buckets, when we could let an old biddy like this down into our wells and grab the buckets that way?

1005 FIRST OLD WOMAN: Stop making fun of me, you wretched man! This way – follow me – to my place.

EPIGENES: I'm not obliged to. Not unless you've paid the City 0.2 per cent of what I'm worth.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Oh, yes, you must, by Aphrodite! I *love* sleeping with lads your age!

1010 EPIGENES: And I *hate* sleeping with women *your* age! I'm not going to do what you want, ever.

FIRST OLD WOMAN [*producing a scroll*]: But *this* will make you!

EPIGENES: Oh, what is it?

FIRST OLD WOMAN: A decree that says you've got to come to me.

EPIGENES: Read it and let's see just what it does say.

- Γρ.^α καὶ δὴ σοι λέγω.
 "ἔδοξε ταῖς γυναιξίν· ἦν ἀνὴρ νέος 1015
 νέας ἐπιθυμῇ, μὴ σποδεῖν αὐτὴν πρὶν ἂν
 τὴν γραῦν προκρούσῃ πρῶτον· ἦν δὲ μὴ θέλῃ
 πρότερον προκρούειν, ἀλλ' ἐπιθυμῇ τῆς νέας,
 ταῖς πρεσβυτέραις γυναιξίν ἔστω τὸν νέον
 ἔλκειν ἀνατεῖ λαβομένας τοῦ παττάλου." 1020
- Επ. οἷμοι, Προκρούστης τήμερον γενήσομαι.
 Γρ.^α τοῖς γὰρ νόμοις τοῖς ἡμετέροισι πειστέον.
 Επ. τί δ', ἦν ἀφαιρεῖται μ' ἀνὴρ τῶν δημοτῶν
 ἢ τῶν φίλων ἐλθὼν τις;
 Γρ.^α ἀλλ' οὐ κύριος 1025
 ὑπὲρ μεδίμνόν ἐστ' ἀνὴρ οὐδεὶς ἔτι.
 Επ. ἐξωμοσία δ' οὐκ ἔστιν;
 Γρ.^α οὐ γὰρ δεῖ στροφῆς.
 Επ. ἀλλ' ἔμπορος εἶναι σκήψομαι.
 Γρ.^α κλάων γε σύ.
 Επ. τί δῆτα χρὴ δρᾶν;
 Γρ.^α δεῦρ' ἀκολουθεῖν ὡς ἐμέ.
 Επ. καὶ ταῦτ' ἀνάγκη μούστί;
 Γρ.^α Διομήδεϊά γε.
 Επ. ὑποστόρεσαί νυν πρῶτα τῆς ὀριγάνου, 1030
 καὶ κλήμαθ' ὑπόθου συγκλάσασα τέτταρα,
 καὶ ταινίωσαι, καὶ παράθου τὰς ληκύθους,
 ὕδατός τε κατάθου τοῦστρακον πρὸ τῆς θύρας.
 Γρ.^α ἦ μὴν ἔτ' ὠνήσει σὺ καὶ στεφάνην ἐμοί.
 Επ. νῆ τὸν Δί', ἥνπερ ἦ γέ που τῶν κηρίνων· 1035
 οἶμαι γὰρ ἔνδον διαπεσεῖσθαι σ' αὐτίκα.
 Κο. ποῖ τοῦτον ἔλκεις;
 Γρ.^α τὸν ἐμὸν αὐτῆς εἰσάγω.
 Κο. οὐ σωφρονοῦσά γ'· οὐ γὰρ ἡλικίαν ἔχει
 παρὰ σοὶ καθεύδειν τηλικούτος ὢν· ἐπεὶ
 μήτηρ ἂν αὐτῷ μᾶλλον εἴησιν ἢ θυγάτηρ. 1040
 ὥστ' εἰ καταστήσεσθε τοῦτον τὸν νόμον,
 τὴν γῆν ἅπασαν Οἰδιπόδων ἐμπλήσετε.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: All right, I'm reading it to you. [*Reads*]
 1015 "Resolved by the women: if a young man desires a young woman, he shall not shag her until he has first screwed her elderly neighbour; and if he refuses to perform such pre-screwing and continues to lust after the
 1020 young woman, the older women shall be permitted, without penalty, to drag the young man away, taking hold of him by the peg."

EPIGENES: Help, I'm going to get screwed alive today!

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Yes; *our* laws have got to be obeyed.

EPIGENES: What if someone from my deme, or one of my friends, comes and offers to go bail for my freedom?

1025 FIRST OLD WOMAN: No good; no *man* has power any more to make a contract over the value of a bushel.

EPIGENES: Can't I swear an oath of excusal?

FIRST OLD WOMAN: No evasive tactics, now!

EPIGENES: Then I'll claim to be a merchant.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: You'll be for it if you do!

EPIGENES: So what am I to do?

FIRST OLD WOMAN: Follow me this way to my place!

EPIGENES: I absolutely must?

FIRST OLD WOMAN: By Diomedes' compulsion! [*Still gripping Epigenes firmly with one hand, she pushes him in the back with the palm of the other.*]

1030 EPIGENES: Then strew your bed with marjoram, break off four vine branches and lay them underneath, put on ribbons, place the flasks beside the bed, and put down the pot of water in front of your door.

FIRST OLD WOMAN: I swear you'll buy me a tiara yet, as well!

1035 EPIGENES: I will indeed, I fancy, so long as you mean one of the wax ones! I think as soon as we're in there you'll fall to pieces!

[*As the old woman half shoves, half drags Epigenes towards her door, the Girl comes out and confronts her.*]

GIRL: Where are you dragging this lad?

FIRST OLD WOMAN: I'm taking him in here; he's *mine*!

1040 GIRL: You're being stupid! He's not old enough to sleep with you, at his age. Why, you'd be more like a mother to him than a wife. In fact, if you establish this law, you'll fill the whole country with Oedipuses! [*In her shock at this, the old woman looses her grip on Epigenes; the Girl takes hold of him, steers him away from the old woman (down, left) and shields him from her.*]

- Γρ.^α ὦ παμβδελύρα, φθονοῦσα τόνδε τὸν λόγον
ἐξηῦρες· ἀλλ' ἐγὼ σε τιμωρήσομαι.
- Επ. νῆ τὸν Δία τὸν σωτήρα, κεχάρισαί γέ μοι,
ὦ γλυκύτατον, τὴν γραῦν ἀπαλλάξασά μου·
ὥστ' ἀντὶ τούτων τῶν ἀγαθῶν εἰς ἐσπέραν
μεγάλην ἀποδώσω καὶ παχεῖάν σοι χάριν.
- ΓΡΑΥΣ Β
- αὕτη σύ, ποῖ τονδὶ παραβάσα τὸν νόμον
ἔλκεις, παρ' ἐμοὶ τῶν γραμμάτων εἰρηκότων
πρότερον καθεύδειν αὐτόν;
- Επ. οἷμοι δείλαιος.
πόθειν ἐξέκυψας, ὦ κάκιστ' ἀπολουμένη;
τοῦτο γὰρ ἐκείνου τὸ κακὸν ἐξωλέστερον.
- Γρ.^β βάδιζε δεῦρο.
- Επ. μηδαμῶς με περιίδης
ἐλκόμενον ὑπὸ τῆσδ', ἀντιβολῶ σ'.
- Γρ.^β ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ,
ἀλλ' ὁ νόμος ἔλκει σ'.
- Επ. οὐκ ἐμέ γ', ἀλλ' Ἐμπουσά τις
ἐξ αἵματος φλύκταιναν ἠμφιεσμένη.
- Γρ.^β ἔπου, μαλακίων, δεῦρ' ἀνύσας καὶ μὴ λάλει.
- Επ. ἴθι νυν, ἔασον εἰς ἄφοδον πρῶτιστά με
ἐλθόντα θαρρῆσαι πρὸς ἐμαυτόν· εἰ δὲ μή,
αὐτοῦ τι δρῶντα πυρρὸν ὄψει μ' αὐτίκα
ὑπὸ τοῦ δέους.
- Γρ.^β θάρρει, βάδιζ'· ἔνδον χεσεῖ.
- Επ. δέδοικα κἀγὼ μὴ πλέον γ' ἢ βούλομαι.
ἀλλ' ἐγγυητάς σοι καταστήσω δύο
ἀξιόχρεως.
- Γρ.^β μή μοι καθίστη.

1043 λόγον Le Febvre: νόμον codd.

1049 τονδὶ παραβάσα Bothe: παραβάσα τόνδε codd.

1060 ἐλθόντα θαρρῆσαι codd.: ἐλθόντ' ἀναθαρρῆσαι van Leeuwen.

1063 γ' ἢ R: ἢ ΓΛ: ἢπερ Σ^R: εἴπερ Σ^A.

FIRST OLD WOMAN [*shaking her fist at the Girl*]: You loathsome, loathsome creature, you were jealous of me – that was why you thought up that argument! But I'll get my own back on you yet! [*She withdraws into her house.*]

1045 EPIGENES [*to the Girl*]: By Zeus the Saviour, sweetheart, you've done me a good turn, letting me escape from that old crone! So tonight, in return for your favour, I'll be giving you a reward – a long thick reward!

[*As the pair move lovingly towards the Girl's door, a second old woman comes out of the far (left-hand) door and confronts them. She is even older than the first, heavily rouged, and brandishes a copy of the decree on sexual rights.*]

1050 SECOND OLD WOMAN [*to Girl*]: Hey, you, where are you dragging this man, in contravention of the law, when it says in black and white that he should sleep with me first? [*Epigenes starts back in fright; the Girl, even more terrified, lets go of him and flees off, left.*]

EPIGENES: God help me! Where have you popped out from, damn and curse you? This evil creature is more horrendous than the last one!

SECOND OLD WOMAN [*locking her arm round his neck*]: Come this way!

1055 EPIGENES [*unable to turn his head, but thinking the Girl is still somewhere near*]: Don't, I beg you, don't stand by and let this woman drag me off! [*There is no reply.*]

SECOND OLD WOMAN [*waving her scroll*]: It's not *me* dragging you off, it's the *law*.

EPIGENES: No, it isn't, it's a sort of Empusa covered in bleeding blisters!

SECOND OLD WOMAN: Hurry up, softie, come with me, and stop jabbering.

1060 EPIGENES: Then please let me first go to the bog and give myself some courage. Otherwise you'll be seeing me doing something yellow, right here, any moment, I'm that frightened!

SECOND OLD WOMAN: Don't worry about that. Come on. You can have a shit once you're in there.

1065 EPIGENES: That's just what I'm afraid of – I may have more of one than I'd like! Look, I'll appoint two competent sureties, if you want.

SECOND OLD WOMAN: I'm not having any sureties!

ΓΡΑΥΣ Γ	ποῖ σύ, ποῖ	1065
χωρεῖς μετὰ ταύτης;		
Επ.	οὐκ ἔγωγ', ἀλλ' ἔλκομαι.	
ἀτάρ, ἥτις εἶ γε, πόλλ' ἀγαθὰ γένοιτό σοι,		
ὅτι μ' οὐ περιεΐδες ἐπιτριβέντ'. ὦ Ἡράκλεις,		
ὦ Πάνες, ὦ Κορύβαντες, ὦ Διοσκόρω,		
τοῦτ' αὖ πολὺ τούτου τὸ κακὸν ἐξωλέστερον.		1070
ἀτάρ τί τὸ πρᾶγμ' ἔστ', ἀντιβολῶ, τουτί ποτε;		
πότερον πίθηκος ἀνάπλεως ψιμυθίου,		
ἢ γραῦς ἀνεστηκυῖα παρὰ τῶν πλειόνων;		
Γρ. ^γ μὴ σκῶπτέ μ', ἀλλὰ δεῦρ' ἔπου.		
Γρ. ^β .	δευρὶ μὲν οὔν.	
Γρ. ^γ ὥς οὐκ ἀφήσω σ' οὐδέποτ'.		
Γρ. ^β οὐδὲ μὴν ἐγώ.		1075
Επ. διασπάσεσθέ μ', ὦ κακῶς ἀπολούμεναι.		
Γρ. ^β ἐμοὶ γὰρ ἀκολουθεῖν σε δεῖ κατὰ τὸν νόμον.		
Γρ. ^γ οὐκ, ἦν ἑτέρα γε γραῦς ἔτ' αἰσχύων φανῇ.		
Επ. ἦν οὔν ὑφ' ὑμῶν πρῶτον ἀπόλωμαι κακῶς,		
φέρε, πῶς ἐπ' ἐκείνην τὴν καλὴν ἀφίξομαι;		1080
Γρ. ^β αὐτὸς σκόπει σύ· τάδε δέ σοι ποιητέον.		
Επ. ποτέρας προτέρας οὔν κατελάσας ἀπαλλαγῶ;		
Γρ. ^γ οὐκ οἶσθα; βαδιεῖ δεῦρ'.		
Επ. ἀφέτω νύν μ' αὐτηί.		
Γρ. ^β δευρὶ μὲν οὔν ἴθ' ὥς ἔμ'.		
Επ. ἦν γ' ἡδί μ' ἀφῇ.		
Γρ. ^γ ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀφήσω μὰ Δία σ'.		
Γρ. ^β οὐδὲ μὴν ἐγώ.		1085
Επ. χαλεπαί γ' ἂν ἦστε γενόμεναι πορθμῆς.		

1067 ἥτις B: εἶ τις RΓΛ.

1077 σε δεῖ Cobet: σ' ἔδει codd.

1084 γ' ἡδί μ' Brunck: ἡδί γ' R: νῆ Δία γ' ΓΛ: μὰ Δία μ' B.

1086 ἦστε Ald. (ἦστε Γ, ἦστε Λ): ἦσται R: ἦτε Suda.

[As she begins to haul him towards her house, a third old woman comes out of the right-hand door, and approaches the pair from behind. She is older and uglier still, and her face is plastered with white lead.]

THIRD OLD WOMAN [to Epigenes]: Where do you think you're going with this woman?

EPIGENES [struggling, at first ineffectively, to free himself]: I'm not going anywhere – I'm being dragged. Blessings on you, though, whoever you are, that you didn't stand by and let me be done in. [He succeeds in wriggling free, turns, sees the Third Old Woman, and nearly collapses.] O Heracles! O Pans! O Corybantes! O Sons of Zeus!
 1070 Another evil creature, and a lot *more* horrendous than this one! Only what on earth *is* this thing, I beg you? Is it a monkey smothered in white lead, or an old hag who's risen from the ... majority?

THIRD OLD WOMAN [laying hold of him]: Don't make fun of me; follow me, this way.

SECOND OLD WOMAN [laying hold of him]: No, *this* way.

1075 THIRD OLD WOMAN [tugging]: I tell you, I'm never going to let you go!

SECOND OLD WOMAN [tugging]: Neither am I!

EPIGENES: You'll tear me in pieces, curse and blast you both!

SECOND OLD WOMAN [waving scroll]: According to the law, you've got to come with me!

THIRD OLD WOMAN: No, not if another old woman turns up who's even uglier.

1080 EPIGENES: So if I've first been massacred by you two, tell me, how will I ever get to that lovely girl?

SECOND OLD WOMAN: That's *your* look-out. *This* [waving scroll] you're duty bound to do.

EPIGENES: Well, which am I to thrust up first, so as to get it over with?

THIRD OLD WOMAN [pulling harder]: Don't you know? You're to come here.

EPIGENES [trying to obey]: Then let this one let me go.

SECOND OLD WOMAN [pulling harder]: No, come here to me.

EPIGENES [trying to obey]: If this one leaves hold of me.

1085 THIRD OLD WOMAN: No, by Zeus, I'm *not* leaving hold of you!

SECOND OLD WOMAN: Neither am I!

EPIGENES: You'd be a fine nuisance, you two, if you ran ferry-boats.

- Γρ.^γ τιή;
 Επ. ἔλκοντε τοὺς πλωτῆρας ἂν ἀπεκναίετε.
 Γρ.^β σιγῇ βάδιζε δεῦρο.
 Γρ.^γ μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ὥς ἐμέ.
 Επ. τουτὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα κατὰ τὸ Καινωνοῦ σαφῶς
 ψήφισμα· βινεῖν δεῖ με διαλελημμένον. 1090
 πῶς οὖν δικωπεῖν ἀμφοτέρας δυνήσομαι;
 Γρ.^β καλῶς, ἐπειδὴν καταφάγης βολβῶν χύτραν.
 Επ. οἴμοι κακοδαίμων, ἐγγὺς ἤδη τῆς θύρας
 ἐλκόμενος εἰμ'.
 Γρ.^β ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἔσται σοι πλέον·
 ξυνεισπεσοῦμαι γὰρ μετὰ σοῦ.
 Επ. μή, πρὸς θεῶν· 1095
 ἐνὶ γὰρ ξυνέχεσθαι κρεῖττον ἢ δυοῖν κακοῖν.
 Γρ.^β νῆ τὴν Ἑκάτην, ἐάν τε βούλῃ γ' ἦν τε μή.
 Επ. ὦ τρισκακοδαίμων, εἰ γυναῖκα δεῖ σαπρὰν
 βινεῖν ὅλην τὴν νύκτα καὶ τὴν ἡμέραν,
 κᾶππειτ', ἐπειδὴν τῆσδ' ἀπαλλαγῶ, πάλιν 1100
 φρύνην ἔχουσαν λήκυθον πρὸς ταῖς γνάθοις.
 ἄρ' οὐ κακοδαίμων εἰμί; βαρυδαίμων μὲν οὖν
 νῆ τὸν Δία τὸν σωτῆρ' ἀνὴρ καὶ δυστυχής,
 ὅστις τοιούτοις θηρίοις συνείρξομαι.
 ὅμως δ', ἐάν τι πολλὰ πολλάκις πάθω 1105
 ὑπο ταῖνδε ταῖν κασαλβάδοιν δεῦρ' εἰσπλέων,
 θάψαι μ' ἐπ' αὐτῷ τῷ στόματι τῆς εἰσβολῆς·
 καὶ τήνδ' ἄνωθεν ἐπιπολῆς τοῦ σήματος
 ζῶσαν καταπιττώσαντες, εἴτα τῷ πόδε
 μολυβδοχοήσαντες κύκλῳ περὶ τὰ σφύρα, 1110
 ἄνω 'πιθεῖναι πρόφασιν ἀντὶ ληκύθου.

1104 συνείρξομαι Bergk: συνείξομαι codd.: συννήξομαι Gelenius.

1108 τήνδ' Bergler: τὴν B: τῶν RΓΛ.

1109 καταπιττώσαντες Γ: καταπιττώσαντας RΛ.

1110 χοήσαντες Gormont (1528): χοήσαντας RΓ: χοήσαντος Λ.

1111 'πιθεῖναι Λ: 'πιτιθεῖναι Γ: πιθῆναι R.

after 1111 Bergk inserted χοροῦ.

THIRD OLD WOMAN: Oh, why?

EPIGENES: You'd drag the passengers about so much, you'd bruise them to death!

SECOND OLD WOMAN: Keep quiet and come here.

THIRD OLD WOMAN: No, no, come to *me*.

1089-90 EPIGENES: This business is definitely being done under the decree of Cannonus: I've got to fuck while held by two warders! How will I be able to ply the oar in both holes at once?

SECOND OLD WOMAN: Easy, once you've eaten up a potful of bulbs.

[At this point the Third Old Woman, with a supreme heave, succeeds in pulling Epigenes away from her rival, and begins dragging him towards her house. The Second Old Woman hurries after them.]

EPIGENES: Help! poor me! I've almost been dragged right to the door!

1095 SECOND OLD WOMAN [*laying hold on him again, and letting herself be dragged along too*]: It won't do you any good; I'm going to tumble in there along with you.

EPIGENES: Don't, in the gods' name! Better to be tangled up with one horror than with *two*!

SECOND OLD WOMAN: Whether you want it, by Hecate, or whether you don't!

EPIGENES [*now almost on the threshold of the Third Old Woman's house*]: Oh, wretched, wretched me, if I've got to fuck a decaying old
 1100 woman all the night and all the day, and then, when I've finished with
 * her, go on to a toad with a carbuncle on her cheek! Aren't I wretched?
 Accursed and luckless, more like, by Zeus the Saviour, to be shut up with
 1105 * wild beasts like these! [*Addressing all who care to take notice*] Still, if (as
 may well be) something does happen to me at the hands of these whores
 when I sail into this port, then bury me right at the mouth of the strait;
 and take this woman [*gesturing with his head towards the Second Old*
 1110 *Woman*], cover her alive with pitch, then pour molten lead over her feet
 right round the ankles, and put her up on top above my tomb to serve as
 a substitute for a monumental urn. [*Epigenes, with the Second Old*
Woman still clinging to him, is dragged inside by the Third Old Woman.
His torch, dropped in the course of the struggle, is left lying on the
ground.]

ΘΕΡΑΠΙΑΙΝΑ

- ὦ μακάριος μὲν δῆμος, εὐδαίμων δὲ γῆ,
 αὐτὴ τέ μοι δέσποινα μακαριωτάτη,
 ὑμεῖς θ' ὅσαι παρέστατ' ἐπὶ ταῖσιν θύραις,
 οἱ γείτονές τε πάντες οἳ τε δημόται, 1115
 ἐγὼ τε πρὸς τούτοισιν ἢ διάκονος,
 ἥτις μεμύρισμαι τὴν κεφαλὴν μυρώμασιν
 ἀγαθοῖσιν, ὦ Ζεῦ· πολὺ δ' ὑπερπέπαικεν αὖ
 τούτων ἀπάντων τὰ Θάσι' ἀμφορείδια·
 ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ γὰρ ἐμμένει πολὺν χρόνον, 1120
 τὰ δ' ἄλλ' ἀπανθήσαντα πάντ' ἀπέπτато·
 ὥστ' ἐστὶ πολὺ βέλτιστα, πολὺ δῆτ', ὦ θεοί.
 κέρασον ἄκρατον· εὐφρανεῖ τὴν νύχθ' ὅλην
 ἐκλεγομένης ὅ τι ἂν μάλιστ' ὁσμήν ἔχῃ.
 ἀλλ', ὦ γυναικες, φράσατέ μοι τὸν δεσπότην— 1125
 τὸν ἄνδρ', ὅπου ὅτι, τῆς ἐμῆς κεκτημένης.
 Χο. αὐτοῦ μένων ἡμῖν γ' ἂν ἐξευρεῖν δοκεῖς
 μάλισθ'· ὁδὶ γὰρ ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον ἔρχεται.
 Θε. ὦ δέσποτ', ὦ μακάριε καὶ τρισόλβιε.
 Βλ. ἐγώ;
 Θε. σὺ μέντοι, νῆ Δί', ὥς γ' οὐδεις ἀνὴρ. 1130
 τίς γὰρ γένοιτ' ἂν μᾶλλον ὀλβιώτερος,
 ὅστις πολιτῶν πλεῖον ἢ τρισμυρίων
 ὄντων τὸ πλῆθος οὐ δεδείπνηκας μόνος;
 Βλ. εὐδαιμονικόν γ' ἄνθρωπον εἴρηκας σαφῶς.
 Θε. ποῖ ποι βαδίζεις;
 Βλ. ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον ἔρχομαι. 1135
 Θε. νῆ τὴν Ἀφροδίτην, πολὺ γ' ἀπάντων ὕστατος.
 ὅμως δ' ἐκέλευε συλλαβοῦσάν μ' ἡ γυνὴ
 ἄγειν σε καὶ τασδὶ μετὰ σοῦ τὰς μείρακας.

1112 δὲ γῆ Dobree: δ' ἐγὼ codd.

1113 αὐτὴ B: αὐτὴ Γ: αὐτὴ RΛ.

1114 θ' Dindorf: δ' codd.

1116 τε δημόται Brunck: τῶν δημοτῶν codd.

1117 μεμύρισμαι Athenæus 15.691b: μεμύρωμαι RΛ Suda: μύρωμαι Γ.

1121 πάντ' ἀπέπτато Suda: πάντα πέπτато codd.

1124 ἔχῃ Λ· ἔχει R: ἔχοι Γ.

1127 γ' ἂν Brunck: γάρ codd.

1137 συλλαβοῦσάν (αν) Λ: συλλαβοῦσα R.

[*Enter, left, Praxagora's maid, somewhat drunk.*]

MAID: Oh, happy people! Oh, blest country! And my mistress, who's happiest of all – and all of you ladies who are standing near our
 1115 door – and all our neighbours and fellow-demesmen – and myself, the maidservant, as well! My head's all scented with scents, and Zeus, they're good ones! But then again, what beats the lot of them by a street is those
 1120 darling jars of Thasian. They stay in your head for so long, when all the others have faded and flown away – which makes them far the best, *far* the best, ye gods! Mix it neat and it'll give you pleasure the whole night
 1125 long, if you pick out the stuff with the most aroma. But, ladies, could you tell me where my master – I mean, where my mistress's husband is?

CHORUS-LEADER [*looking off right*]: I think you'll be most likely to find him if you stay right here; here he comes, on his way to dinner.

[*Enter, right, Blepyrus, garlanded, and with a girl on each arm.*]

MAID: Master! my blest, my three-times-happy master!

1130 BLEPYRUS [*slightly taken aback*]: Do you mean me?

MAID: Yes, you, by Zeus, and beyond compare! Who could possibly be more blester than you? Of all our citizens, numbering more than thirty thousand, you're the only one who hasn't had his dinner!

BLEPYRUS: It's certainly a fortunate man that you're talking about! [*He makes to hurry off, left, without the girls.*]

1135 MAID [*stopping him*]: Here, where are you off to?

BLEPYRUS: I'm going to dinner.

MAID: By Aphrodite, you're last of all by a long way! But all the same, your wife told me to get hold of you and bring you there, and these

- οἶνος δὲ Χιός ἐστι περιλελειμμένος
καὶ τᾶλλ' ἀγαθά. πρὸς ταῦτα μὴ βραδύνετε, 1140
καὶ τῶν θεατῶν εἴ τις εὖνους τυγχάνει,
καὶ τῶν κριτῶν εἰ μὴ τις ἐτέρωσε βλέπει,
ἴτω μεθ' ἡμῶν· πάντα γὰρ παρέξομεν.
- Βλ. οὐκ οὖν ἅπασιν δῆτα γενναίως ἐρεῖς
καὶ μὴ παραλείψεις μηδέν', ἀλλ' ἐλευθέρως 1145
καλεῖς γέροντα, μειράκιον, παιδίσκον; ὥς
τὸ δεῖπνον αὐτοῖς ἐστ' ἐπεσκευασμένον
ἀπαξάπασιν - ἦν ἀπίωσιν οἴκαδε.
ἐγὼ δὲ πρὸς τὸ δεῖπνον ἤδη 'πείξομαι·
ἔχω δέ τοι καὶ δᾶδα ταυτηνὴ καλῶς. 1150
- Χο. τί δῆτα διατρίβεις ἔχων, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἄγεις
τασδί λαβών; ἐν ὅσῳ δὲ καταβαίνεις, ἐγὼ
ἐπάσομαι μέλος τι μελλοδειπνικόν.
σμικρὸν δ' ὑποθέσθαι τοῖς κριταῖσι βούλομαι·
τοῖς σοφοῖς μὲν τῶν σοφῶν μεμνημένοις κρίνειν ἐμέ, 1155
τοῖς γελοῖσι δ' ἡδέως διὰ τὸν γέλων κρίνειν ἐμέ·
σχεδὸν ἅπαντας οὖν κελεύω δηλαδὴ κρίνειν ἐμέ·
μηδὲ τὸν κλῆρον γενέσθαι μηδὲν ἡμῖν αἴτιον,
ὅτι προεῖληχ'· ἀλλὰ πάντα ταῦτα χρὴ μεμνημένους
μὴ 'πιорκεῖν, ἀλλὰ κρίνειν τοὺς χοροὺς ὀρθῶς ἀεί, 1160
μηδὲ ταῖς κακαῖς ἐταίραις τὸν τρόπον προσεικέναι,
αἱ μόνον μνήμην ἔχουσι τῶν τελευταίων ἀεί.
- ὦ ὦ, ὦρα δὴ,
ὦ φίλαι γυναῖκες, εἴπερ μέλλομεν τὸ χρήμα δρᾶν.
ἐπὶ τὸ δεῖπνον ὑπανακινεῖν· Κρητικῶς οὖν τῷ πόδε 1165
καὶ σὺ κίνει.

1139 περιλελειμμένος Λ: παραλελειμμένος R.

1145 παραλείψεις Brunck: παραλείψης RL.

1146 καλεῖς Blaydes: καλεῖν codd.

1155 κρίνειν Λ: κρίν R.

1161 τὸν Bentley: τόν τε codd.

1163-4 ὦ ὦ ... ὦ φίλαι Dindorf: ὦ ὦ (ω ω R) ... φίλαι codd.: ὦ ... ὦ φίλαι Zimmermann.

1140 girls with you. There's Chian wine still left, and all the other good things too. So [*including the chorus in a sweeping gesture*] don't you dilly-dally; and also [*turning to the audience*] any of the audience who may be rooting for us, and any of the judges who isn't turning his eyes away, let them come with us; we're going to lay on absolutely everything.

BLEPYRUS: Well, aren't you going to be properly generous and
 1145 say it to *everyone*, not leaving anybody out, liberally inviting old men, youths and little boys alike? Because there's a dinner prepared for every single one of them – if they go off home! [*Picking up the torch which*
 1150 *Epigenes had dropped*] But I'm going to hurry along to dinner now; I've got this torch as well, you see, conveniently enough!

CHORUS-LEADER: Well then, why are you still hanging around here, instead of taking these girls and going off there with them? And while you're making your way down there, I'll accompany you with a sort of pre-dining celebration song. [*Turning to the audience*] But I want to
 1155 give a little bit of advice to the judges: [*here the piper begins to play*] to those who are intellectual, to remember the intellectual bits and vote for me; to those who enjoy a laugh, to think of the laughs they've had and vote for me; in other words, I'm asking just about *everyone* to vote for me. And don't let the lottery act to our disadvantage at all, the fact that
 1160 we were drawn first: you must remember all these things, and not break your oath but always judge the choruses fairly, and not behave in the same way as those wretched supertarts, who never have a place in their memory for any man but their latest one.

[*To her colleagues*]

Hey, hey! it's time now,
 dear ladies, if we're going to do the thing at all,
 1165 to get a move on towards dinner.

[*To Blepyrus, as the chorus begin to dance*] So you get your feet moving too,
 in Cretan fashion.

Βλ. τοῦτο δρῶ.
 Χο. καὶ τάσδε νυν < x -υ-
 -υ-x -υ > λαγαράς τοῖν σκελίσκοιν τὸν ῥυθμόν.
 τάχα γὰρ ἔπεισι

λοπαδοτεμαχοσελαχογαλεο-
 κρανιολειψανοδριμυποτριμματο- 1170
 σιλφιοπαραλομελιτοκατακεχυμενο-
 κίχλεπικοσσυφοφαττοπεριστερα-
 λεκτρουν†οπτεγκεφαλλιο†κιγκλοπε-
 λειολαγωοσιραιοβαφητραγα-
 λοπτερυγών. σὺ δὲ ταῦτ' ἀκροασάμε- 1175
 νος ταχὺ καὶ ταχέως λαβὲ τρύβλιον·
 εἴτα κόνισαι λαβὼν
 λέκιθον, ἵν' ἐπιδειπνῆς.

Βλ. ἀλλὰ λαιμάττουςί που.

Χο. αἴρεσθ' ἄνω, ιαί, εὐαί· 1180
 δειπνήσομεν, εὐοῖ, εὐαί,
 εὐαί, ὥς ἐπὶ νίκη·
 εὐαί, εὐαί, εὐαί, εὐαί.

1165-6 lacuna after νυν posited by Meineke (Λ leaves a space after λαγαράς): λαγαράς
 <ἄγαν | ταχὺ χορείας ὄρσον ὑπάγειν> τοῖν Coulon (partly following White):
 νυν <τὰς μείρακας | δεικνύναι κέλευε> λαγαράς van Leeuwen: perh. e.g. νυν
 <τὰς μείρακας | χρή συνυπάγειν κοῦφα> λαγαράς.

1169 τεμαχοσελ· Λ Suda: τεμαχοσσελ· R.

1171 παραλο· Sommerstein: παραο· codd.: ἁλιπαρο· Ussher: τυρο· Blaydes.

1172 κιχλ· Le Febvre: κιικλ· codd.

1172 κοσσυφοφαττο· Dindorf: κοσσυκοφαττο· R: κοσσυφαο· Λ.

1173 †οπτεγκεφαλλιο† codd.: †οπτοκεφαλιο· Coulon (†οπτο· Meineke, κεφαλιο· Bothe):
 †οπτοπιφαλλιδο· Ussher: perh. †οπτοφαληριδο·.

1174 τραγαλο· Blaydes: τραγανο· codd.

1176 ταχὺ καὶ codd.: τρέχε καὶ Blaydes.

1177 κόνισαι λαβὼν R: λαβὼν κόνισαι Λ.

1181 δειπνήσομεν codd. Suda: δειπνήσωμεν Newiger.

1182 εὐαί ὥς ἐπὶ νίκη vel sim. codd. Suda: perh. ὥς ἐπὶ νίκη, εὐαί (cf. *Lys.* 1293).

BLEPYRUS [*beginning to dance*]:

That's what I'm doing!

CHORUS-LEADER: And these girls as well
<should join in moving lightly and> nimbly, with their slim legs, to
the rhythm.

[*The Maid and the two girls join in the dance.*]

CHORUS: Because on the table there may be a
dishy-slicy-sharky-dogfishy-
1170 heady-left-oversy-very-strong saucy-
silphiumy-bit-salty-honey-poured-overly-
thrush-upon-blackbirdy-ringdovey-pigeony-
chickeny-roast-cooty-wagtailly-
rockdovey-haremeaty-boiled-winy-dippy-
1175 deliciousy-wingedy thing! So you [*to Blepyrus*] listen to that
and get yourself a plate, quick and fast,
then raise the dust – but take
some porridge to dine on.

BLEPYRUS [*beginning to dance off towards the Agora*]:

But they must be shovelling it down!

CHORUS [*dancing off after Blepyrus, the Maid and the girls*]:

1180 Raise it high, iai, evai!
We're going to feast, evoi, evai,
evai, a feast of victory!
Evai, evai, evai, evai!